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ASTOR, LENOX AND
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MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN ADAMS DIX

COMPILED BY HIS SON

MORGAN DIX

Illustrated

IN TWO VOLUMES.—Vol. I.

NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS, FRANKLIN SQUARE
1883

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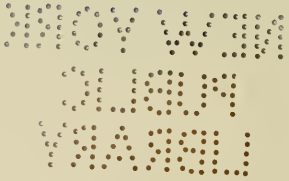

C. M. D.

MATRI AMABILI PIÆ SUIS DEVOTISSIMÆ
SUIS VICISSIM CARISSIMÆ
QUÆ POST ANNOS LII
FELICITER CUM MARITO NOBILI ET AMANTE AD FINEM PERDUCTOS
DOMUM INTEREA PRUDENTER ORDINANS
DILIGENTER GUBERNANS
VIRTUTIBUS GRATIISQUE ILLUMINANS
NUNC VIDUATA INFIRMA
DOLORIBUS CREBRIS AFFLICTA
NECNON PATIENS SUB TENEBRIS HUJUS MUNDI
OBUMBRATIS LUMINIBUS CORPORIS NON ANIMI
EXSPECTAT
DONEC IN CHRISTO REVIDEAT AMISSOS
OPUSCULUM HOC VOTIVUM
HEU PARUM DIGNUM
INSCRIBENS DEDICAVIT
FILIORUM SOLUS SUPERSTES
AMANS HUCUSQUE
AMATURUS IN ÆTERNUM

PREFACE.

It is often, if not always, said, by way of general criticism on such a work as this, that a son ought not to undertake to be his father's biographer. The qualities demanded in the historian include strict impartiality, freedom from personal bias, and skill and fearlessness in analyzing his subject; but these cannot be expected where the inspiring motive of the writer is filial affection, and where the object to be studied is rendered precious in his eyes by the threefold power of the tie of blood, the precept of "the first commandment with promise," and a love and admiration which have grown and deepened with each added year. I feel the force of these considerations as I begin my task: they would have put a stop to farther progress had I thought that men differed seriously in their estimate of my father's life and work, or that I should have to deal with transactions which, for the honor of the name, I should be compelled to explain or tempted to cover up. But in his case a verdict has already been pronounced, which attests the confidence and respect in which he was held by his fellow-countrymen. I know nothing in the record which, if now disclosed for the first time, would be likely to change the judgment of the people, nor do I believe that much diversity of opinion exists among us as to his career in general, or particular matters involving his reputa-

tion and his honor. These considerations have lessened my reluctance to attempt the present task; and since I am urged on every side to do the work myself, and not to intrust it to another hand, there seems to be no alternative but to proceed as best I may. I do not, however, conceal the fact that the inspiring motive of this effort to tell the story of my father's life is that veneration for him which grew with the companionship of more than fifty years, and was stronger than ever when, kneeling by his bedside, I closed his dying eyes. There would be no adequate motive to write the history unless I believed that it was a noble life, and that they who come after us will be the better for knowing what he did to the glory of Almighty God and the good of his fellow-men, and in the service of a country which he loved with the devotion of a loyal and patriotic heart.

My father's eighty years cover a great part of the history of the Republic. Born just before the close of the eighteenth century, he left us when the nineteenth was far in its last quarter. He was one of those who formed the link between the period of the Revolution and that of the final and perpetual consolidation of the American Union. His acts are interwoven with the records of an age of wonderful events and impressive phenomena. His was a life of untiring activity, wherein he served the State with hand and head, with sword and pen, and always ably; and the proof of the public confidence in him lies in this fact, that he was called to almost every office which a citizen can hold. And while his natural gifts, ample and varied, rendered him competent to meet the requirements of public life, he conducted himself, in each position, in such a manner as to inspire a universal belief in his integrity. Again and again was this common faith in him exhibited in a practical way; for the reader of this memoir will observe how often, in times of perplexity, when a mere

name, with what it stood for, might restore a sense of security, he was called upon, and set in full view of the people, with the investiture of power and the commission to do whatever might be necessary; and how rapidly, at such times, the clouds dispersed. This occurred, not once only, nor twice, but often; and thereon do I claim for him a place among the purest of patriots, the wisest of counsellors, and the most honest of men. Nor did his patriotism waver even in the darkest hours; nor can I say that his faith ever failed, though I remember more than one conversation from which I inferred that his concern for the future of the commonwealth had led him almost to doubt its ability to overcome the corrupting and demoralizing influences that sap the foundations of the State. Meanwhile, amid the cares and duties of a very full life, he found time to pursue certain studies which gave him the reputation of a scholar, and an enviable place in the world of letters. There are departments of literature in which his knowledge was full and critical and his attainments were uncommon; and in this he resembled those great statesmen of the mother country who wear a crown of double honor—men strong in the forum, on the platform, and in the council-chamber, yet happier in those secluded walks where converse is held with the poet, the philosopher, and the sage. But what, after all, were these things, compared with others, to us who lived our life close by his, and were with him from day to day? We only who were of his house and blood can fully appreciate that personality, that strong individuality, which constitutes the chief treasure of our recollections, and has left the impression of a sweet, simple-hearted, tender soul, which loved its own devotedly, and revered God, and won from men a deeper affection as, drawing nearer, they saw what he was. I have no terms to express my feelings on this point; nor will I attempt to do so, lest this sketch should sud-

denly lose its historic cast, and take the form of another "In Memoriam," laden with vain regrets and longings for the return of one beloved, whose place knoweth him no more.

Many years ago we began to urge my father to write his biography. His incessant occupations, however, were an obstacle to the task; he never had time for it. He hardly knew what release from active duty meant; up to within forty-eight hours of his death he was transacting official business; he found not the leisure to do what we asked. But when seventy years old he wrote, for our amusement, a little history of his boyhood, covering the first twelve or fifteen years of his life; and to this he subsequently added a few pages, bringing the memoranda down to the year 1820. These fragments I shall now transcribe, precisely as he left them, adding some notes, by way of additional information, on points which he merely touched in passing, convinced that the reader will be glad to have this autograph introduction to what is to come after. But, first, a few words concerning those of his name who preceded him in this country.

The family were of English stock, and Puritans. The name of Anthony Dix appears in the Plymouth Records in 1623; he was admitted as a freeholder in that town in 1631, and at Salem in 1632. Edward Dix, of Watertown, admitted freeman 1635, had a son, John, born in 1640; he appears to have died July 9, 1660. Ralph Dix, a descendant, was one of the early settlers of Ipswich, Mass.; he died at Reading, September 24, 1688. His grandson, Jonathan, born at the homestead in Reading, resided at Littleton, whence he removed to Boscawen, N. H., or, as it was originally called, Contoocook. He was a good man, and for more than seventy-five years a member of the Congregational Church; he married Sarah, daughter of the Rev. Benjamin Shattuck, of Littleton, Mass.;

and died at the residence of his son Timothy, December 24, 1804, having attained the age of 94 years, 8 months, and 13 days. Timothy Dix, a native of Littleton, Mass., was a man of some eminence in his day, a patriot and a soldier; he held a lieutenant's commission in the Revolutionary War, and raised a company for that service; he was also postmaster at Boscawen, under President Jefferson's administration. His character is portrayed by contemporaneous chroniclers as that of a man of promptitude and decision, devotedly attached to the cause of his country, firm and patient under the many trials of his life; one who, in public as well as in private relations, was remarkable for strict integrity and fidelity to duty. His son, Timothy Dix, Jr., my grandfather, is remembered in New Hampshire as an active, enterprising, liberal, and enlightened citizen, distinguished for his courteous bearing and honorable character. He held the office of Selectman of the town, and represented it in the State Legislature in the years 1801–'4. In 1812, when the war broke out between Great Britain and the United States, he received a commission in the Regular Army, and at the time of his death, which occurred in face of the enemy, at French Mills, Canada East, November 14, 1813, was Lieutenant-colonel of the Fourteenth Regiment of Infantry. His wife was Abigail Wilkins, of Amherst; her father was a captain in the Provincial Service, and lost his life during the ill-fated expedition of General Richard Montgomery against Quebec. Of these parents, and of that honest, God-fearing, and patriotic stock, on the 24th day of July, A.D. 1798, and in the village of Boscawen, in the State of New Hampshire, John Adams Dix was born.

I proceed, without more words, to the little history of his earliest years, written by him for the entertainment of his children.

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I.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

BOYHOOD.—YOUTH.—ARMY LIFE.

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MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN ADAMS DIX.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

I REVISIT, after the lapse of fifty years, the scenes of my childhood. The old familiar objects around me wear new aspects, and yet they have lost nothing of their identity. The outlines are the same, but how strangely shrunken they appear to be in their proportions! Our minds and our bodies, by force of some incomprehensible law, expand together. As we increase in stature the physical objects which surround us seem to diminish in magnitude. Most of us, I think, are conscious of this change. The river which is flowing past as it has flowed for ages, and which had to my sight an immeasurable distance across when I was a child, looks like a mere brook in my manhood. But I have in the mean time stood on the banks of the Mississippi and the Missouri, and these are now my standards of comparison. The mountain on the opposite side, which always appeared to me to have some vague and inconceivable height, has dwindled into a hill of the most inconsiderable dimensions: but I have crossed the Rocky Mountains, the Alps, and the Apennines, and I instinctively measure all inequalities of the earth's surface by these gigantic elevations. Yet this miniature mountain, which filled my childish conceptions, and which I can still fancy draped, as of

old, in gorgeous foliage, and casting its cool shadows far down into the meadows as the sun was sinking behind it, is as familiar as ever to my sight. But, in the progress of settlement, it has been denuded of trees; and its stony front, as its covering has been stripped off, reveals itself in deep seams and sharp protuberances of granite.

But let me turn from the present to the distant past.

THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF MY LIFE.

I was born in a village in New Hampshire.* It was a full mile in length. Its single street was terminated at one extremity by the meeting-house, and at the other by a bridge crossing a small stream. On one side, half a mile off, the Merrimack River flowed quietly along, with an intervening flat, known as the intervale.† On the opposite side was a

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* In the year 1732, memorable as that in which George Washington was born, a number of men, mostly natives of Newbury, in the Province of Massachusetts Bay, associated themselves together with a view to founding a new settlement. Two years later they went forth and made their home on the west bank of the Merrimack River, in the district of New Hampshire, which was then under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts. The proprietors gave to the township, which was seven miles square, the Indian name of Contoocook. An act of incorporation was obtained April 22, 1760, and the town was thenceforth known as Boscawen. The change of appellation was natural. The old name was associated with images of misery and sorrow; the settlers had been harassed by the savage allies of the French; their lives were spent in fear; and every man was of necessity a soldier. While the petition of the proprietors for a charter was before the government of the Province of New Hampshire, the reduction and demolition of Louisburg took place, and Generals Amherst and Wolfe and Admiral Boscawen became the heroes of the day. Thus it happened that the brave old sailor gave his name to the newly-organized plantation, to the great delight of the inhabitants, whose gloomy recollections were changed to auguries of brighter days.

† "The territory may be divided into three general divisions, viz., *interval*, *pine-plain*, and *high land*, requiring a different cultivation.

"The *interval* upon the Merrimack, nearly the whole length of the town, is in many places widely extended, originally covered with a heavy

range of thickly-wooded hills. I have seen many more beautiful villages, but none that had for me the attraction of this. It may be because it was my birthplace. My father was one of the first settlers. He was active and indefatigable in business, and he soon gathered a community about him. He knew that in order to make his neighbors contented he must bring within their reach everything essential to their comfort. He hired a storekeeper, opened a store, and filled it with dry-goods, hardware, and groceries, enlarging his list from time to time as the settlers became able to increase their indulgences. Wagon-loads of supplies were brought from Boston as the stock on hand became low, and the arrival of one of these trains—for there were generally three or four wagons in company—was a source of the greatest interest and excitement. As soon as the goods were opened and ready for purchasers they were visited, inspected, and gradually bought and consumed. The women came to see the new calicoes and taste the fresh sugar, and the men to handle the axes and spades.

As the village increased in population and means my father established a school. He hired the teachers and provided the school-books. In process of time a school-house was built, and the school became one of the most noted in the country. My father was very scrupulous in regard to the teachers. He would have none but the very first, both in regard to qualifications and respectability of character. They sometimes insisted that he should receive them into his own family; and in several instances he did so, rather than lose them. Some of the most distinguished men in the State—afterward known

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growth of elm, butternut, maple, and basswood. When cultivated it proved very productive, and even at this period bountifully rewards the labor of the husbandman."—*A Chronological Register of Boscawen, in the County of Merrimack and State of New Hampshire, from the first settlement of the town to* 1820. *In three parts: Descriptive, Historical, and Miscellaneous.* Compiled by an order of the town, passed March, 1819. By Ebenezer Price, A.M., Pastor of the Second Church in said town. Concord: Printed by Jacob B. Moore, 1823. 8vo, 116 pp.

throughout the Union for their great abilities—were among our village school-masters. In the summer we had female teachers, and they were of the same high rank in talent and character. One of them became the wife of a jurist and statesman who has had few equals in public reputation.* It was in this school that I received the rudiments of my education. I was a favorite with them all, and I cherish the remembrance of their good opinion as a distinction to be proud of. The teachers being sometimes inmates of my father's family, I was almost constantly with them; and when I was sufficiently advanced to be sent to an academy I became sensible of the great advantage I had derived from the influence of these excellent persons. Indeed, I think I have felt it strongly in every period of my life.

The village, as I remember it after the lapse of fifty years, consisted of some thirty dwelling-houses, standing, in about equal number, on opposite sides of the long, straight street. A few were white, but they were for the most part painted in Spanish brown or a dirty red. There were a tavern and a blacksmith's shop near the centre of the village. The school-house was also midway between the two extremities, and directly back of it was the burying-ground. I think the school-house lot was originally a part of it. It was an odd fancy to put them in this close contact—to bring together

* My father, in a private letter referring to the early family history, says: "I remember an oration delivered by Daniel Webster on the 4th of July, 1806, at Concord, 'before the Federal gentlemen of Concord and its vicinity,' as set forth on the title-page of the pamphlet copy. He was then in the practice of the law, and an inmate of my father's family. They were zealous political opponents, but personal friends, although the lines were at that period very sharply drawn between the Federal and Republican parties. My father took great interest in the village school, and in many instances procured the teachers. I have a distinct recollection of General Fessenden, the father of the late Senator Fessenden of Maine, as one of them, and also of Grace Fletcher, one of the loveliest of women, with whom Mr. Webster became acquainted at my father's house while she was teaching, and whom he afterward married."

those who were preparing for the battle of life and those who had fought and fallen in it. I do not remember, while I was at school, to have received any gloomy impression from this near neighborhood of the dead. On the contrary, it was no uncommon thing for me and my playfellows to clamber over the fence, and carry on our games among the graves. But after I had left school tombstones were erected to mark the resting-places of my mother, a little sister, and my only brother; and I never afterward approached the spot without a deep feeling of depression.

One of my earliest recollections is the total eclipse of the sun in 1806. It was about the middle of June, and vegetation was in full luxuriance. Four or five beautiful trees stood in front of my father's house. He had planted them fifteen years before. One was an elm, and a robin had built her nest among its branches. I had been told that the earth would be covered with darkness, and that the beasts and birds would be deceived by the counterfeit night. I watched the robin with the deepest interest. As the darkness deepened the fowls hurried to their roosts, and the robin, to my great delight, flew to her nest. It was appalling to see the beams of the sun wholly intercepted at mid-day, and the face of the earth buried in gloom. As the moon passed over the sun's disk it seemed as though a funereal pall was drawn over it. As soon as my boyish curiosity in regard to the fowls was satisfied a feeling of terror came over me. I ran into the house. I could not bear the outer darkness. The family had gone out to witness a phenomenon never to occur again within the compass of any of our lives, and had left my youngest sister, then about two years old, in her cradle. I took her up and held her in my arms, to relieve the feeling of awe caused by the sudden disappearance of the sunlight; for, although the gloom had come on gradually, it seemed to me at the last that the total darkness was instantaneous, like that which follows the extinction of a lamp. But the light soon began to return, and I recovered from my panic in time to go out and

see the simple birds and fowls leaving their nests and roosts, with the idea, no doubt, that they were waking up to a new day.

The next winter* death — thenceforth to be but too frequent a visitor—first appeared in our family. My grandfather lived near us. Two gardens, his own and my father's, separated the two families; a broad gravelled walk ran through the grounds, and our communications with each other were carried on without going into the street. My great-grandfather, who lived with my grandfather, was near a hundred years old; but until within a short period before his death he was in full possession of his bodily and mental powers. His greatest weakness was the garrulousness of age. On Thanksgiving-day the two families were always united, and four generations sat down together at my father's table. A few weeks after one of these reunions (the last we were to know) my grandfather came to our house at daybreak and told us the old man was dead. His spirit had passed away in the stillness of the night, and so quietly that my grandfather and grandmother, who occupied the adjoining room, with a door open into his, were unaware of it until they rose. The shock which the intelligence gave to us children was indescribable. The presence of our aged ancestor, who moved about among us in patriarchal solemnity, and to whom we clung like vines to a tree of stately growth, seemed a part of our own existence; and I could hardly understand at first how his life could be taken away without violence to our own. I incline to think this is a common feeling with children when Death for the

* I leave this as it stands, although there is undoubtedly a mistake. The date of the total eclipse is correctly given by my father as 1806; but the death of his great-grandfather occurred eighteen months before, and not after, the eclipse. The error is a slight one; it probably arose from the double impression made on the boy's mind by the shadow over the earth and the deeper shadow in the house—he associated the two horrors of great darkness with each other, as though they merged into one. And it may also be noted that a death occurred just as he states—that of his brother, in October, 1806.

first time separates them from one of their own family. It is for this reason that they feel a terror never equalled at any re-appearance of the same unwelcome visitor. As we advance in age we become more familiar with his presence; and, after threescore years, I think few persons, excepting those who are conscience-stricken by the remembrance of great crimes, view his near approach with insupportable dread. My feelings of horror were at their height when the funeral procession moved away from my grandfather's house. There were no hearses with us in those primeval days. The coffin, covered with its sable pall, was laid upon a bier, and was borne by four men to the grave. The earth was white with snow, and as the bearers passed on with their burden they formed together the blackest of all contrasts. I turned away from the window and buried my face in my mother's bosom —the tender mother who was in a few years to be followed to the same resting-place by the same ghastly procession of sorrowing friends.

But her hour was not to come until she had herself been overwhelmed with a new and a deeper grief. My only brother* was two years older than myself. He was bold, active, and intelligent. He was a leader in every enterprise among those of his own age. Though but eleven years old, he had all the self-possession and fearlessness of a man. He was passionately fond of horses, and, as my father kept several, he was constantly on horseback. One day a new one was brought home in my father's absence; he was young, and only partially broken. My brother was immediately on his back, galloping up and down the street. The animal ran away, and threw him. He was taken up and brought home in a state of insensibility, but without any ostensible injury. The next day he seemed well again; but in a short time he began to droop, and in a few weeks was laid by the side of my great-grandfather.

This calamity made the deepest impression upon me. I

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* Timothy Fuller Shattuck Dix, born Feb. 11, 1796; died Oct. 16, 1806.

had idolized my brother, and was his companion in all his enterprises and excursions, wandering with him among the fields, fishing with him in summer, and in winter following him on my sled down the sides of the steepest hills. It was many months before I could be induced to go out as usual and join my playfellows in their sports. I kept almost constantly in the house with my mother. My father had, for that period, a good English library. I had scarcely ever looked into a book, except such as contained my lessons at school. In the first days of my grief, while strolling listlessly about, I entered the library. A book lay upon the table; I took it up, and found it to be a volume of Goldsmith; I opened it at the "Good-natured Man." My interest was excited; I finished the play without laying down the book. The moment dinner was over I hurried to the library, and did not leave it until it was too dark to read. For months I literally lived upon the English poets and essayists. I was then but nine years of age, but my thirst for reading was insatiable. For a full year I scarcely took time for exercise. My father and mother indulged me in my passion; and I have since thought that the latter, with a secret consciousness that our earthly communion was soon to end, encouraged me, for the purpose of having me always in her sight. I cannot remember at this remote period all the authors I read. Those which made the strongest impression on me at first were Goldsmith and Addison; but they were soon laid aside for Shakspeare. I did not confine myself to the poets and essayists. There was no system in my reading. I literally devoured whatever I chanced to take up — poetry, history, and now and then a book of a lighter character, though my father's library contained few other than standard works. He was too much immersed in business at home and abroad to pay much attention to me, and my mother left me to the guidance of my own impulses, satisfied with the assurance that in a well-chosen library I could not go far astray, and probably thinking that my interest would be more likely to be kept up, if uncontrolled.

She never recovered from the shock of my brother's death. Her health had been delicate for many years: it now began rapidly to decline. If I had been older I could not have failed to notice the change, slow and insidious as it was; but I was constantly with her, and for this reason was the less likely to mark the almost imperceptible stages of its progress. I look back to this year as the happiest of my life—precursor as it was to the year of sorrow which was to succeed it. As I recur to it a thousand little incidents crowd on my memory, unthought of then, but rising up now to rebuke my blindness. I remember how often, as I was kneeling at her feet or resting my head on her shoulder, I was struck by the pallor of her face and by the thinness of her white fingers as she passed them through my flowing hair or pressed them against my cheek. I fancy her now averting her countenance, after gazing long and affectionately on me, to conceal from me the tears with which her eyes were overflowing—eyes always brilliant, but now, though dimmed with tears, shining with an unnatural light. I thought it was my lost brother on whom her thoughts were intent. I am sure, now, that she was sorrowing for the child from whom she was about to part, and not for the one she was so soon to meet. It was not until she had reached the last stage of weakness that the consciousness of a coming horror awoke within me. During the last months of her illness its progress was marked by more frequent and perceptible changes. At first she often walked out with me, holding my hand in hers, listening to my comments on what I had read—for books were at that time almost the chief subject of my thoughts—or talking to me in tones of angelic sweetness, that still seem to fall like notes of distant music on my ear. The beautiful nature around us—the calm, blue skies, the green fields, the luxuriance of trees and flowers—was all in harmony with her own. I have never since met with such gentleness or sweetness of temper. In all the neighborhood there was not a single person, young or old, whose heart she had not won. These walks filled up the last

happy summer of my boyhood. As the autumn advanced she grew weaker, and they fatigued her. For a month more she drove out. Then she remained always in the house, for a while moving wearisomely about, and at last never leaving her bed. I think it was not until then, when one day she pressed me to her bosom, and I felt how thin the arms which encircled me had grown, and heard her whispered benediction, as if she were about to set out on a distant journey, that the coming calamity broke upon me, as the morning breaks on the unconscious darkness of the night. It was a moment of agony and horror I cannot, even after the lapse of fifty years, bear to look back upon. I burst into a flood of tears and filled her chamber with my sobs. There needed no farther interchange of intelligence between us. No word had been spoken; but she knew that the dark truth was unveiled to me, and during the few days that remained to us—days passed constantly together—her calm resignation, her hopefulness of the future life, and the endearments showered upon me, almost reconciled me to her translation to the bright heaven the portals of which were opening for her. It was only the dark cloud about to fall upon me that overwhelmed me with grief.

But let me dwell no longer on these bitter experiences. In her last hour she gave birth to a daughter, and endowed it with the feeble remnant of her own life.

Another funeral train—the saddest of all—went out from my father's house, and she was laid by my brother's side.* A few weeks later her infant followed her.† Her grave was re-opened, and the lifeless child was laid on her bosom, there to rest until the Great Day.

My father, who had long foreseen the coming calamity, took refuge in his extended and engrossing business, pursuing it with redoubled energy. My sisters had returned from boarding-school in a distant town a few days before my moth-

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* She died December 3, 1808.

† Martha Sherman Dix, born October 16, 1808; died January 11, 1809.

er's death. My father resolved that they should remain at home, and he brought with him from Boston a governess to take charge of them. In addition to the ordinary routine of English instruction, she taught them music and drawing — accomplishments at that time unknown in the sequestered region where we lived. My father was a tasteful musician, and drew with the pencil of an artist. He had transmitted his tastes to his children, and I was soon a proficient, under the new governess, in both arts. But my new occupation did not interfere with my reading. I was still as indefatigable as ever, until I grew feeble. My sleep was disturbed, and I often rose in the night under strong nervous excitement and left my room, wandering about the house. My father found me twice under these circumstances, and became alarmed for my health. He determined to detach me for a time from my studies. He had a passion for shooting, and with either the rifle or shot-gun was an unerring marksman. When he first settled in the country the woods were full of bears, wolves, and panthers, and he had waged perpetual warfare with them. They had gone farther back with the advance of settlement, and were at that time rarely seen. On his return from his next visit to Boston he gave me a silver-mounted fowling-piece, and instructed me in the use of it.* It struck

* Here is a letter about this fowling-piece, addressed to "Master John Adams Dix, Student, Exeter." The precautions to be observed in its use must have rendered it, for the time, a harmless weapon, and quite safe in a boarding-school:

"Boscawen, Sept. 19, 1809.

"ADAMS,—You will receive herewith your military clothes and my silver-mounted fowling-piece; 'tis very unsuitable for a training gun, and I very much fear 'twill get injured; 'tis so very slender a little hard usage would spoil it. I do not wish you to use any powder, have therefore put a piece of wood in place of a flint, and desire you may not take it out, or suffer it to be taken out, till you see me; you will probably conceive it to be rather hard to be debar'd the use of powder, but must allow me to be the best judge, and will, I presume, be perfectly satisfied on my saying that I have sufficient reasons for it. I shall set out to-morrow for Dixville; expect to be gone three weeks. Shortly after I return I

a secret vein within me, and from that moment I became an indefatigable sportsman. The passion now at seventy years of age is as strong as ever, and I have indulged it through life, whenever I have been able to escape from the urgency of my private business or public employments. After practising for a few days at a mark, I singled out a bird near the house and brought him to the ground. I could not have made a more unfortunate essay of my skill. It was a lark, which sang upon the trees in front of the door, and greeted my father as he awoke from his slumbers with its matin song. When he told me this, and expressed his sorrow for what I had done, I felt as though the mark of Cain was blazoned upon my forehead. I looked upon the instrument of death with inexpressible loathing, and hid it away for several days. My father, thinking I had suffered enough for my thoughtlessness, took me into the woods with him. The wild-pigeons were flying, and we filled our pouches with game. As we were clambering over the hills a tremendous rustling was heard in a thicket before us; it was the sudden flight of a covey of partridges. I had never heard the sound before, and expected every instant to see a panther emerge from the woods. I confess to a moment of fear, and I think I unconsciously fell behind my father. He was a man of action, and not of words. Without speaking, he turned back on me a look, as I interpreted it, of reproach and scorn. It seemed to say, "Have I a coward in my family?" I felt it keenly. The blood, which my momentary alarm had thrown back upon my heart, rushed to my extremities, and no doubt crimsoned my cheeks. My self-possession was regained as rapidly as it had been lost. I cocked my piece instinctively and planted myself directly before him. I shall never forget the smile of approbation he gave

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expect to go to Portsmouth—shall go or come thro' Exeter. We are all well. Your mamma and sisters all desire much love to you. Mine and your mamma's compliments to Mrs. Giddings and daughters.

"In haste. Yr. Father,

"T. Dix, Jr."

me; it said to me more distinctly than any words could have done: "I am satisfied—you will not be found wanting in trying emergencies." I have often thought, if some wild beast had come out upon us, as I expected, how poor a match I should have been for it, with my slender fowling-piece and the small shot with which it was charged. Relieved by my father's explanations from all apprehension of any such unequal adversaries, I now lived, in fair weather, in the woods, pursuing my studies at home only on rainy days. In a few months my cheeks had become ruddy again and my constitution invigorated with fresh strength.

The period was approaching when I was to be sent away from home for my classical education; but, before I enter upon it, let me cast back some glances at my native village. I have spoken of the meeting-house at one of its extremities. The society was Congregational in its form. It acknowledged no earthly head. I had a distinct idea of this peculiarity in its doctrine from the conversations which I heard at my father's house. My mother was a sincere, devout, and trustful Christian. My father was a believer, but not a member of the Church. I sometimes thought his views did not accord with those of the preacher; but he said nothing to warrant such an inference. No man was more regular than himself in his attendance on divine worship on Sundays, and they were the only days in the year on which any religious exercises were observed, except the first Monday of every month, on which evening a prayer-meeting was held. I derived no agreeable impression whatever from these religious observances. The meeting-house was, like most others at that day, painted white, covered with shingles, full of windows, with plain, plastered walls inside; it was cold and dreary in its aspect within and without. It had no window-blinds; and as the sun moved round the building in summer the congregation moved about in their pews, to escape from his burning rays. The winters were awful: the thermometer often fell twenty or thirty degrees below zero. There was no fireplace or furnace, not even

a stove. To this arctic temperature we were exposed two hours in the morning and two in the afternoon.* The sermon was almost always an hour long; and the prayers and psalms, and reading of the Scriptures, occupied about the same time. In my whole life I have never suffered so much from cold. My mother always took a foot-stove with her, and it was more frequently under my feet than hers. In the sleigh on our way to meeting we were always comfortable, for we were enveloped in buffalo-skins. But we could not take them with us into the meeting-house. When the wind was high the cold was nearly insupportable. The window-sashes vibrated and rattled in their loose frames, and the cold air poured upon us through numberless inlets. My feelings were anything but devotional; and I pray God to forgive me the many secret irreverences of which I was guilty. The preacher was a learned and a conscientious man;† but I hated his long discourses (drawn out, as it seemed to me, with a malicious perverseness) when I was perishing with cold. The strangest speculations took possession of my mind. I had read in some book in my father's library that certain holy men had voluntarily submitted to the severest inflictions. One, whose name does not occur to me, lived on the top of a column for a number of years, exposed to all the vicissitudes of the seasons. Supposing him to have lived in a good climate, I wondered whether he suffered as much as our preacher, holding forth by the hour in an atmosphere fifty degrees below freezing-point. I wondered whether the latter, like the holy father, was acting on a principle of self-infliction, or whether he was punishing his congregation for their stubbornness in sin. If his motive was merely personal, then I wondered why he could not dismiss the congregation and perform the penance by himself,

* It appears that in 1827 a stove was purchased, the following item appearing on the society records: "Voted to purchase at auction one cord hard pine-wood, two feet long, split for stove, to be cut in the spring; which was struck off to Lieut. Nathan H. Holt, at $1 50."

† The Rev. Samuel Wood.

instead of making us the companions and the victims of his martyrdom. I could not help secretly wishing, on these wretched occasions, that he might freeze his feet, that his arm might become so benumbed with cold that he could not gesticulate, or that his tongue might cleave to the roof of his mouth. It was not because I had any malice against him in my heart, but because he was, by protracting his sermons so unreasonably, inflicting on me sufferings too great to be borne. I knew him better in after-years, and became sincerely attached to him; and if he had not been ignorant of all that passed through my mind during those winter services, I would have confessed my uncharitableness and implored his forgiveness. But there never could have been any reconciliation between me and the meeting-house. I always detested it; I never looked upon it as the house of God. Town-meetings and elections were held in it. I had seen it defiled with tobacco-juice; I had seen it desecrated by fisticuffing in the heat of political conflicts; I had heard its bare walls ring with tumultuous laughter, when some man, who had been prosperous in money-making and assumed airs, was elected hog-constable by acclamation. These scenes were too often uppermost in my thoughts when the sermon was in progress, and a devotional frame of mind was impossible.

I am sure these impediments in my path were not the fruit of any constitutional impiety. On the contrary, I have from my youth been a believer, and became many years ago a member of the Church. My mother's affectionate teachings had implanted within me grains of devotion which time could not fail to bring forth and ripen. But her God never seemed to me the same Deity who was worshipped at the meeting-house. Hers was all goodness and mercy and pardoning love; while the other seemed to me a severe master, burning with anger at the impenitence of the human race. In my simplicity I asked my father, after my mother's death, why I felt so. He bade me trust to my mother, and consider our Divine Master as she had described him. I often think how much more

wholesome her teachings were than those to which she had been accustomed to listen. I remember asking my father why our meeting-house was so uncomfortable. I reminded him that our house had warm rooms, cushioned chairs, and nicely papered walls; and asked him if we ought not to make God's house as good as our own. I never could get any satisfactory answers to such inquiries as this last. Indeed, he evaded them, or told me I would understand these things better when I grew older.

Such were my early impressions in regard to religious worship; and, but for the remembrance of my mother, I fear a much longer time would have elapsed before they were supplanted by better ones.

The people of our village, though unsophisticated, were not wanting in intelligence or in the rudiments of education. They were entirely ignorant of the world, and heard little of it except from my father, who made frequent visits to Boston, and who, on his return, always imparted to his wondering neighbors the knowledge he had there gained. Newspapers were rare in those days, and the villagers who had not been born in the place came from equally sequestered districts. Yet, with the exception of a few laboring men who led unsettled lives, I doubt whether there was a single person in the village, male or female, who could not read and write. Their reading was, certainly, confined to a very limited range of books — the Bible, "Pilgrim's Progress," Baxter's "Saint's Rest," Fox's "Lives of the Martyrs," and some elementary works on geography and history. There were a few families, however, whose field of literary research was wider and more varied; and I remember that there were books in my father's library which went the rounds of the more intelligent households. The simplicity of our neighbors was well illustrated by an incident which occurred in my presence. My father had brought home a Boston paper, and was reading to a number of them a paragraph which, he said, he believed to be untrue. "Why," said one of his auditors, "do you believe they

would print a lie?" He, no doubt, believed lies might be told —such acts of turpitude might even have been committed within the sphere of his own experience—but the enormity of deliberately putting a lie in type was one which his untutored fancy had never conceived.

The grandest and most exciting event in our village life, and one of the very earliest of which I have a distinct recollection, was the organization of a company of militia. My father was chiefly instrumental in getting it up, but declined (with a disinterestedness, as I thought, which should have given him an immortal fame) all share in its honors. He would neither be captain nor corporal, though, I believe, he was pressed to accept both those distinguished positions. If I could have seen him marching either in front or in rear of this formidable body—the first I had ever seen in military array—my happiness would have been complete.

The day appointed for the first drill was one of the sultriest I ever knew. It was about the middle of July, and the heat of the sun was inconceivable. In my impatience to see the parade commence I may have done the company injustice; but I suspected them of a disposition to postpone the exercises to a cooler hour of the day; whereas I expected to see them, like the heroes of the "Iliad," setting the elements at defiance. There was nothing said to warrant my suspicion. I only inferred it from the discussions which were kept up for several hours as to certain details of the organization—particularly as to questions of precedence; that is, who should march next to the captain, and who should bring up the rear. I found that the social position of the parties was an important element in settling the controversy; whereas, in the regular service, the whole thing is disposed of by stature, the tallest men being assigned to the flanks, with a uniform descent from each to the common centre. But of these ingenious devices I had no knowledge at that early period of my life.

While engaged in the settlement of the preliminaries referred to a furious storm arose. My youthful imagination may

have exaggerated it, but I think I have never since witnessed such thunder and lightning. In a few minutes the rain poured down in torrents, and continued for two hours without diminution. The whole surface of the earth was flooded, and the street was a pool of water. The moment the rain ceased the line was formed. My heart beat tumultuously as it filed off from the front of my father's store. I was not conscious of any organic defects at the time, though I could not fail to notice the great want of uniformity in dress and equipment. Most of the privates were in their shirt-sleeves, the officers only, with a becoming tenaciousness of their dignity, keeping on their coats. There were not many muskets, and, I believe, not a single bayonet in the whole line. The guns were chiefly fowling-pieces, and there were a number of very inferior substitutes. I suspected one of the privates of carrying on his shoulder the butt-end of one of my fish-poles, broken off for the purpose, and I know that a pitchfork was abstracted for the emergency from my father's stable. But I had read enough of war to understand its exigencies, and I considered them as fully justifying acts which, if committed under a less imperious necessity, would have been wholly indefensible. When I saw the men moving off under their gallant commander into the centre of the street, with the water ankle-deep, and marching through it with heroic indifference, I felt the deep injustice I had done them, before the storm, in suspecting them of shrinking from the sun. It occurred to me, it is true, that after the fiery heat of the day, which was not yet entirely allayed, the water was anything but unpleasant. But I indignantly dismissed this suggestion, as the offspring of an unworthy suspicion, and was sure that they would have marched through a pool of molten lead with the same alacrity, if the good of their country had demanded such an act of devotion.

To one familiar with military exhibitions the fact that there was no drum or fife would have detracted materially from the effect of this. It was a want which, in my igno-

rance, I neither felt nor noticed. The military body before me had, as I thought, its appropriate musician.* He was a man who played the clarionet—inferior, certainly, to the trumpet, as a military instrument, but reproducing with a softened expression some of its lower and milder tones. The performer was remarkable for an enormous nose of the aquiline form, and as he marched down the street at the head of the column (if a single file could be so called), playing an animating air, his aspect struck me as even more martial than that of the captain.

The effect this military display made upon me was almost magical. I fancied myself in the presence of heroes. I almost felt transformed into a hero myself. I was sure these unconquerable men, notwithstanding their defective armament, were equal to the direst emergency. As the thunder rolled in the distance I likened it to volleys of artillery discharged by an enemy, which these gallant spirits were marching out to defy and to conquer. They seemed to me to be thirsting for military glory, and longing only for a foe on whom they might wreak their vengeance. I caught the contagion, and made to myself a sacred vow that, if ever I grew into manhood, I would become a soldier or perish in the attempt.

My first lessons in the dead languages were given by the clergyman under whose hibernal discourses I had suffered so much. He lived three miles from the village, and had usually

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* "I cannot remember how often the stages ran from Boscawen, north and south; but I have a vivid recollection of Joseph Wheat as the driver to Concord, and at one time to Amherst, I believe—a very remarkable man in his way. He had an enormous nose, which gave rise to numerous jokes, of many of which he was himself the author, for he was, like poor Yorick, 'a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy.' I remember him also marching through the village at the head of a company of militia, just organized, and playing on the clarionet, he being the only musician on the occasion, which was a company drill, preparatory to the general muster, or 'general training,' as the regimental parade was usually called."—*From a private letter.*

half a dozen young gentlemen living in his family, and preparing themselves, under his direction, for college. He was an excellent Latin and Greek scholar, and one of the best of men. He had a farm of some twenty or thirty acres, and cultivated it with his own hands, with the assistance of a single hired man. His life was as simple as it was exemplary. He rose at daybreak in summer, and in winter long before light, and was busy in his study till breakfast preparing his sermons for the succeeding Sabbath. The rest of the day was divided about equally between his pupils and his farm. In his agricultural labors he made no distinction between his hired man and himself. He did his full share of ploughing, planting, and harvesting. The only occupation in which he took no part was the care of the horses. I do not think his sermons were ever fully written out. He had very copious notes, and in his anxiety to illustrate his points with clearness he became tedious in spite of his learning and his unaffected piety. Yet there was an earnestness and a solemnity in his exhortations which were very impressive. To his pupils he was all that a parent and a teacher could be—kind, patient, and indefatigable. This was my first absence from home. It lasted some six months, and in that time I had not only mastered my Latin and Greek grammars, but had made such proficiency in both tongues as to be able to translate easy exercises with facility. My fellow pupils were among the first young men in the State. One became, years afterward, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and another a minister at a foreign court.* The half year I was with them passed away almost

* There is, perhaps, an error here; for in a private letter subsequently written, and to which I occasionally refer in these notes, my father writes: "I was for a portion of a year (1809, I think) an inmate of his (Rev. Dr. Wood's) family, with Charles Haddock, who was Chargé d'Affaires at Lisbon during General Taylor's administration; Charles Woodman, at one time Speaker of the lower branch of the New Hampshire Legislature; and one of the Dr. Kittredges so familiar to the memory of the men of that period as members of the medical faculty of the State."

imperceptibly. I had no feeling of home-sickness after the first few days. I became sincerely attached to our teacher. His unceasing kindness was irresistible. And yet he was the unconscious author of a new grief to me. It was the long prayer over the breakfast-table. It answered the double purpose of a morning-prayer and grace before meat. It commenced as soon as the breakfast was on the table, and lasted from ten to fifteen minutes. There was no actual suffering in the "hope deferred" of which these protracted supplications were the source except when our appetites were unusually keen; but I really believe the annoyance was very little inferior to that which the long winter sermons had caused me. My heart sunk as I saw the smoking viands grow cold, and the vapor issuing from the spouts of the teapot and coffee-urn gradually fading away and giving evidence of the cooling process within. I fear my thankfulness to Providence for the good things before me was marred by a vindictive feeling toward the venerable pastor, who was making them comparatively worthless by his untimely prolixity. I am sure the cook—who was always called in to unite in the family devotions—often betrayed unmistakable signs of resentment, as she saw the gravies and melted butter, on which she had expended herself, relapsing into their primeval solidity. I relate these things as they actually occurred. They are obsolete customs now; and they seem strange to me as I recall them to recollection. The age has grown shrewder and, let us hope, not less grateful to Providence for its mercies, even if we do not think it necessary to couple the expression of our thankfulness with personal inflictions.

I think my father's object in sending me so short a distance from home was to make the wider separation he had in view less trying. While I was with the village clergyman I always saw him and my sisters on Sundays, and passed with them the intermission between the two sermons. At the end of six months I was sent to an academy several miles farther off,

and was only to come home three times a year.* The village, of which it was the principal ornament and pride, was larger than the one in which my father resided, but less attractive to me. Indeed, it must have been so to any lover of fine natural objects, for it lacked the river and the mountains, which, when I was at home, were always in my sight. There was but one place of public worship. The society was Congregational, and the clergyman, with whom I boarded, was known throughout the State as a man of learning and genius. His wife was one of the kindest of women, and I soon became her special favorite. She often talked to me of my mother, whom she had known, and I have no doubt this circumstance had much to do with her great kindness to me, though the goodness of her heart would naturally have led her to distinguish me from the other children committed to her care, who had known no such sorrow as mine. While I was conscious of her partiality to me, shown as it was in a thousand ways, I do not think it was noticed by the others, so faithfully was her duty discharged to all. She had no children of her own, and if she had been thus favored I am sure she could not have watched over them with more affection or care. Not long after my arrival there was a terrific thunder-storm; it was not much inferior to that with which the first military parade in my native village was accompanied. A tree near the house was struck by the lightning, filling all our hearts with terror. Undaunted herself, she gathered us together and took us into a dark passage in the centre of the house, as far as possible from the chimney-stacks, where she supposed there would be the least danger, and, making us kneel down behind her, she prayed with all the fervor and tenderness of a mother for the preservation of her "dear children," as she called us, from

* This school was at Salisbury. Stephen H. Long, afterward a distinguished officer of United States Engineers, was preceptor. My father was lodged with the Rev. Dr. Worcester, who, like Dr. Wood, was held in high esteem in the ministry.

the fury of the storm. She made no allusion to herself, and I do not think her own danger ever occurred to her, so absorbing was her anxiety for us. The kindness of this excellent woman is ever fresh in my remembrance. I have never since found any one whose affection so nearly resembled, in its outward manifestations, that which I had known in my mother.

The principal of the academy—the Preceptor, as he was called—was a young man of more than ordinary capacity and attainments. He had graduated at college as a finished classical scholar and an excellent mathematician; and he was known afterward as one of the first Engineers in the United States. He ruled us with firmness; but he was always considerate and just, and I do not think there was a single pupil who did not love and respect him. The year I passed under his direction was one of the happiest I have known since my mother's death. There was a girls' as well as a boys' department, and several of the misses were fellow-boarders with us. They were all of excellent families, and one only of them turned out badly in her womanhood. She had more personal attractions than any of her associates, and a serenity of temper which no provocation could disturb. She was, indeed, the belle of the village as well as the school. We boarded together, and I became her devoted admirer, though she was two years older than myself. But for this disparity of age and my extreme youth, I am sure our watchful female guardian would not have allowed us to be so much together. We were inseparable companions, and she was as warmly attached to me as I was to her. There was no need of keeping us apart. I was but ten years of age, and she only twelve. It is true, as time advanced and I was a year older, it occurred to me that when I became a man the difference between us would disappear, and then there would be no obstacle to a nearer association—an association which conveyed to my mind no other idea but that of perpetual companionship. But no such intimation passed between us. I have often wondered

since whether this thought (for it was nothing more), if it had been expressed, would have had any influence in saving her from the infamy of her after-life. It is a wretched history of ruin to her and misery to her respectable family—a history I do not intend to narrate. When we parted I sincerely believe she was as pure in heart as she was in conduct. We met once afterward in Boston. Ten years had gone by, and I was a man. I went to see her, knowing her guilt and her impenitence. She was then in the full bloom of womanhood, and surpassingly beautiful. The interview was a very distressing one. It was unexpected to her, and the sight of me, her friend and admirer in the days of her innocence, filled her heart for the first time with shame and remorse. Two days afterward her earthly career, begun in prosperity and virtue, and ending in dishonor and guilt, was suddenly closed. It was many weeks before I recovered from the shock I received from this meeting and its sad sequel. I have anticipated the close of this unhappy episode in my life in order to dismiss it forever hereafter from my thoughts. If she had lived in the days of Charles II. she might have been a Duchess of Cleveland, or, in the reign of the late King of Bavaria, a Countess of Landsfeldt. May God forgive her many transgressions, and, above all, the last act, by which she terminated her miserable life!

I was not long in taking a high rank among the pupils of my own age. I had a remarkable facility for acquiring languages; and as the classics were at that day the chief branch of academic instruction, my proficiency was very marked. I also made good progress as a speaker. A few years later an eminent tragedian, who had given me a series of lessons in elocution, said to my father, then in command of a regiment in the army of the United States, "Colonel, your son has great constitutional facilities for becoming an orator." I believe this was the judgment—though it would have been expressed in less sounding phrase—of the preceptor, the pupils, and the people of the surrounding country, for it was not long before I ap-

peared before them as a public speaker. The occasion to which I refer was the semi-annual examination, or rather the exhibition, as it was appropriately termed. To be more accurate, the examination of the students, which took place at the academy, was followed by an exhibition at the meeting-house of the oratorical and dramatic powers of the pupils. It was got up with the most studied preparation and all the scenic effect of a country theatre. The pews, occupying about one-third of the area of the building, were boarded over and converted into a stage, reserving a small space in the rear for robing. It was an era in the lives of those of us who had never witnessed a dramatic performance. I had read all of Goldsmith's and most of Shakspeare's plays, but had not the faintest conception of the mode in which they were represented. One of the older pupils, who had a knack at painting, got up some sketches of trees and foliage for the sides and background of the stage. We had no shifting scenes; and as we came to the performances, which were quite varied, it occurred to me that the actors, when they should, according to the book, have been conversing in drawing-rooms or streets, were always holding communion with each other in umbrageous solitudes. The drop-curtain was unexceptionable. It was muslin of a fiery red; and to my sight the effect, as it rose or fell, concealing or displaying the green trees behind it, was gorgeous beyond anything I had conceived. I think it made the same impression on the spectators, who were, at least nine out of ten, inhabitants of the neighboring country, and as ignorant as myself of dramatic representations. Ours commenced in the morning about ten o'clock, and lasted till one. After that we had an intermission of an hour for dinner. At two they recommenced, and continued till eight in the evening. It was midsummer, and in that northern latitude the twilight ran far into the night. We played "The Taming of the Shrew" with unbounded applause. The genteel portions of the comedy were, as I thought, glorious; but the drunken tinker filled the measure

of my conception in regard to the power of imitation. I was, in fact, so convulsed with laughter that the performance which was to follow, and in which I was to bear the most distinguished part, was at one time in imminent peril of miscarriage. It was a dialogue between David and Goliath, taken from one of Hannah More's sacred dramas. I need not say which part was assigned to me. When the preceptor proposed it I shrunk from it, as far exceeding my powers. I was only familiar with the history of the giant and his youthful antagonist through the seventeenth chapter of the First Book of Samuel. I knew I was to be armed with a sling, and I was somewhat familiar with its use, but I did not think myself sufficiently expert to hit my adversary in the forehead in good faith and actually bring him to the ground, as I took it for granted the spectators would expect—at least with a reasonable resemblance to the reality. But when I read Miss More's poetical version of the meeting, which the preceptor put into my hands, and found that after the challenge had been given and accepted the parties, by virtue of the *Exeunt* (that ingenious device of the play-writers), were to retire, leaving the audience to learn the particulars of the combat from Abner, the captain of the host—in a word, when I found that the impossibilities of the drama were to be enacted behind the scenes, I entered upon my task with the utmost enthusiasm. I may truly say, in modern phrase, that my performance was "a great success"—I do not think the drunken tinker carried away as many laurels as myself. My adversary was an overgrown youth of some twenty-two years of age, who had just left the plough and commenced his classical education with a view to the ministry. He was full six feet in height, and his frame was dilated and hardened by field labor. When he stood before me and waved his enormous wooden spear over my head, with those terrific words—

> "Around my spear I'll twist thy shining locks,
> And toss in air thy head all gash'd with wounds"—

(a feat to which he was quite equal), the intrepidity with which I withstood and defied the giant was rapturously applauded. But when I, a mere stripling, bade my colossal adversary follow me out, and pronounced the concluding lines—

> "The God of battle stimulates my arm,
> And fires my soul with ardor not its own"—

the enthusiasm of the audience was boundless. I was called back upon the stage to receive the congratulations of the admiring spectators. The meeting-house was crowded. Hundreds of bright eyes looked down upon me from the galleries. Tumultuous applause greeted my re-appearance. I did not know that this was a common occurrence in theatrical life. It seemed to me to be a new-born distinction, the offspring of an unexampled success. My triumph was complete. It was the greatest day of my life. I felt that I had done a noble deed. I do not think that David himself could have been better satisfied with his own performance in the original drama. But I was not intoxicated by my success. Like that exemplary Israelite, I resolved not to disappoint the public expectation. I would live and devote myself to the performance of great and virtuous actions. I considered myself called on thus to dedicate myself by the unbounded applause I had received. I have often looked back, not altogether without a sense of the comic, on these innocent dawnings of youthful ambition. There is, nevertheless, a serious aspect in these retrospections — in the dissipation of pleasant and inspiring illusions, when we compare the aspirations of boyhood with the truths taught by our experience in after-life. My triumph was not a mere ephemeral achievement of the day. For a long time I saw myself noticed by the country people as they passed me in their wagons; and on one occasion a red-cheeked girl driving by pointed me out to her companion as blooming as herself, and I heard her say, "There's the fine little fellow that acted David."

THE SECOND TEN YEARS OF MY LIFE.

I had reached an age when my father thought I might be sent to the principal academy of my native State at Exeter, and placed under the tutelage of the celebrated Dr. Abbott, who was for more than half a century the principal of that institution. During that period it gathered within its walls more distinguished men than any other academy of New England.* The students were of a higher order than those

* Phillips Exeter Academy, one of the oldest endowed classical schools in New England, was founded by Dr. John Phillips, of Andover. Its charter is dated April 3, 1781; it is therefore the oldest institution of learning established by State authority in New Hampshire, Dartmouth College having been chartered by royal grant in 1769. Dr. Abbott was principal for just half a century—from 1788 to 1838.

In the Catalogue for 1869 there is a charming picture of Dr. Abbott, who is represented as a man of firmness and dignity of character united with great natural sweetness of disposition and suavity of manners: "He never met the youngest academy scholar in the street without lifting his hat entirely from his head, as in courteous recognition of an equal; and an abashed and awkward attempt to return the compliment was the urchin's first lesson in good-manners and respect for his teacher." Among the characteristic usages of the academy were these:

"4. After worship is begun they are not to rise up to any who may enter. At all other times they shall rise and bow respectfully to gentlemen when they enter the room and when they leave it.

"5. Every student shall be exact upon his attendance on all the exercises of this academy. He shall carefully prepare for them, and not fail to sweep, kindle fire, ring the bell, shut up the academy, tend the fire, etc., each in his turn, and exactly at the time required.

"9. As the character and usefulness of men greatly depend upon amiable and engaging manners, the Preceptor would highly recommend, and strictly requires, a constant and persevering attention to the rules of true honor and politeness, and a careful endeavor to express the principles of unaffected benevolence, by a cheerful readiness to perform every kind office in their power, and to do it in the most obliging and becoming manner; ever remembering that great favors are diminished, and that small ones greatly increase, by the manner in which they are conferred. A gift may be unkindly bestowed, and a favor kindly and politely refused.

"10. All students shall strictly observe and perseveringly practise

in the academy I had just left. I found a large number of young men of the most respectable families of Massachusetts, and some, from that State, who became distinguished in after-

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good-manners and civility to all; condescension and kindness to those younger than themselves, affability and good-manners to their equals, and their language and behavior to superiors shall be decent and respectful, never speaking disrespectfully of them or their conduct when absent. This rule is carefully to be observed to all men of public character. These important rules are highly recommended and strongly enforced, as containing the sum of virtue and benevolence, agreeable to that complete rule of virtue and honor—whatsoever you can rationally desire others should do for you, that do for them in the kindest manner."

I add the following eulogy of Dr. Abbott, from the work already referred to:

"It was not strange, then, that he gained so strong a hold upon the love and respect of his pupils. To them he always appeared as if surrounded by some invisible enclosure, which even the boldest could not overstep without a bowed head and a feeling almost of awe. Others may have been equally or even more successful as mere teachers; but in the general discipline of mind and character, in exerting an influence upon the boy which continued through the subsequent life of the man, no instructor ever surpassed him. It was a common remark among his pupils that it was a shame to deceive Dr. Abbott, or to tell him a lie; and even if one ventured to do so he had a sort of uncomfortable consciousness that the doctor had detected him, but saw fit to overlook the offence and allow it to be its own punishment. He was a competent scholar after the fashion of his day, though he made no pretension to wide and accurate learning. It was rather his pride to induce his pupils, by their own efforts, to surpass their instructor in scholarship. But he had excellent taste, and a hearty appreciation of the beauties of the Latin and Greek authors, which he never failed to impart to his classes.

"To those who never studied under Dr. Abbott this picture may seem overcharged; but it was not mere accident which procured for him uninterrupted success and surpassing influence as head of the academy for fifty years, or which gave him such pupils as Lewis Cass, Joseph Stevens Buckminster, Daniel Webster, Leverett Saltonstall, Nathaniel A. Haven, Joseph G. Cogswell, Theodore Lyman, Edward Everett, the twin Peabodys, John A. Dix, John G. Palfrey, Jared Sparks, George Bancroft, Jonathan Chapman, Ephraim Peabody, and a host of others whom the country delights to honor."

life for their literary acquirements. Sparks was just leaving, and Palfrey was a fellow-student with me for more than a year. There was a gravity, not to say a stateliness, in the administration of this institution which was in strong contrast with the easy-going management of the other. The extended career of Dr. Abbott furnishes the best proof of his fitness for the position which he held with such distinguished success. I remember him as a man of solemnity, and not seeming to me to possess those qualities which invite familiarity on the part of his pupils. Those who knew him intimately may have found in him qualities which a student, meeting him only as one in authority, would fail to discover. I should describe him as very able, very just, and very devoted. That he had a rich vein of humor I know, for it was my fortune to open and develop it. But for the circumstance I allude to I think I should have terminated my connection with this institution without leaving any trace of my presence, except the registration of my name in the catalogue of students. I believe I was diligent, and made good progress in my classical course. It was as a speaker that I was remembered by the academic staff and my fellow-pupils; though it must be confessed that my notoriety (I cannot call it distinction) was not of the most exalted character. My performance came off at one of the periodical exercises in public speaking. I had found in an old English magazine a burlesque account of the Siege of Troy, and after some hesitation I resolved to test the self-possession of our grave and reverend seigniors. I understood perfectly that it was an audacious experiment, and that unless it was as audacious in the execution as in the design it would prove an ignominious failure. I determined, therefore, that it should not miscarry for want of dramatic effect. I intrusted no one with my secret, not even my fellow-boarders. Palfrey prepared the way for me by a recitation calculated to deepen the prevailing gravity. When he pronounced the first line—

"In yonder cave, formed by no mortal hand, a hermit lived"—

he undertook, by an appropriate motion of his own mortal hand, to show how it was done. After a very creditable performance for an undisciplined neophyte in the school of oratory he made his exit, deepening the natural solemnity of the piece by a kindred gravity of manner. If, as has been said, there is always a charm in contrasts, the field for my performance could not have been better prepared; and I had the foresight to see that I could make it more striking by keeping up a discordance between my manner and my matter. My gravity was not exceeded by that of my predecessor. It was, therefore, like a sudden awakening from a solemn reverie when I made the customary academic bow and commenced:

"The Grecians came running to Troy—
The Trojans went running to meet them:
It is known to each little school-boy"

[an appropriate gesture, embracing the whole body of students, Sparks included]

"How the Greeks they horse-jockeyed and beat them."

My solicitude as to the reception of my performance was increased during the recital of the first two lines by an expression on the face of Dr. Abbott, which I fancied to be a doubt on his part whether he should let me proceed or order me off the stage. But the horse-jockeying was too much for his gravity and that of the other professors, and the students, encouraged by the sign, gave audible vent to their mirth. Thus relieved from my anxiety, I delivered the remaining stanzas with an effect which was received with clamorous applause:

"No house could that day be endured—
They made them too hot for the holders;
And Æneas, not being insured,
Set off with his dad on his shoulders.

"His fortune he tried on the ocean—
And then such palavering stories!
To Dido he told with emotion—
Jubes renovare dolores.

"When he'd gained all his ends, 'Dear Æneas,'
Said she, 'if you love your poor Dido,
When you're coming this way, call and see us.'
Thinks he, 'I'll be hanged if I do.'

"'Sister Anne,' then said she, 'all is done,
And he's off—only see what a way 'tis;
He's gone with his saucy young son,
And that rascal his *fidus Achates*.'

"A cord round her neck she suspended,
The one end a bedpost was tied to—
I'm sorry the story's so ended,
But there was an end of poor Dido!"

I retired, with my pocket-handkerchief to my eyes, in mock distress at the tragical end of the disconsolate widow, and was followed by long-continued plaudits, in which the Faculty joined. Some months afterward a simple-minded youth attempted to repeat the experiment; but he had hardly pronounced the first line when the Rev. Principal called out, in a voice of thunder, "Leave the stage, sir!" It was one of those achievements of which the flavor, as well as the glory, evaporates with the first performance.

At the end of a year my studies terminated, and without leaving any strong impression on my mind as to the institution except that its administration was orderly and ably conducted. There was nothing in my associations or my personal experience so strongly marked as to be often recurred to in subsequent years.

The following year I was sent to Montreal, and became a pupil in the College. I made the dreariest of all journeys through New Hampshire and Vermont. It was in the latter part of the month of March, and the snow was rapidly dissolving, so that the gentleman who had charge of me, and I, were frequently under the necessity of going on foot while the horses were drawing the sleigh painfully over the bare ground. It was during the prevalence of that horrible hibernal disease

known as the spotted fever, and we were several nights obliged to stop in taverns, whose inmates were lying ill with it. At length we reached the St. Lawrence and crossed it on foot. The last sleigh had broken in, and the next day the river showed only a mass of moving ice. Such was my introduction to Montreal.*

My father sent me to the college principally for the purpose of acquiring the French language; and as English was not spoken, with a single exception, by any of the professors

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* The following letter, written to him by his father, will be read with interest:

"Boscawen, May 27th, 1811.

"Adams, my dear Boy,—We have waited long and with much anxiety till last week to hear from you, when we received yours of the 25th March, and with it a letter from Mr. Atkinson of the 30th Ap'l. We had, however, three or four weeks previously rec'd a letter from Mr. Wilkins, informing us of 'your safe arrival at Montreal after a tedious journey, of your health, etc.' I conclude your journey must have been very tedious, if you were, as Mr. Atkinson tells me, 'compelled to stump thro' the mud on foot from Burlington;' am much pleased that you so soon gained a situation in the College, and hope it will prove both agreeable and advantageous; I do not entertain a doubt that your conduct will be such as to secure not only the approbation but the applause of the Government of the College, to do which may be of much importance to you. We were a little disappointed in not receiving a longer letter from you, with a more particular account of your journey, of the novelties you have seen, and the new scenes you have witnessed. We conclude, however, you wanted time, and have them in reserve for future letters, which we depend on receiving soon, and certainly shall not peaceably dispense with; 'tis now time that we had three letters from you, and have had but one, and that dated more than two months ago; you must not neglect us so.

"I was at my settlement in Dixville a few weeks ago. I was then, I suppose, within about 100 miles of Montreal; I thought of you and looked over the mountains, but could not see you. I shall go to Boston to-morrow, and shall hope and expect to find letters from you on my return, in about 8 days. The children and our friends are all well; all that can lisp of the former send love to you. Give my compliments to Messrs. Atkinson, Peterson, and Wilkins.

"Your father, Timothy Dix, Jr.

"John Adams Dix."

and few of the students, my progress was very rapid. Here, too, I may say, although I had studied Latin and Greek in the superficial way in which those languages were taught in the academies in the United States at that period, the real foundations of my classical education were laid. Every step was thoroughly mastered before another was allowed to be taken. I had never felt much interest in these studies before; but I now acquired a fondness for them, and particularly the Latin, which I have never lost, and which has led me to pursue them to some extent under the most unfavorable circumstances and at the most laborious periods of my life. I attribute it altogether to the clear comprehension which I acquired of their structure; for it is not easy to take an interest in that which we do not understand. My knowledge of the Greek was lost, I am sorry to say, after a few years; but the Latin I have continued to study and read every day, with brief periods of intermission; and if anything I have written or spoken in a somewhat extended career of official service has any force, I believe it to be chiefly due to my constant acquaintance with a language which condenses so much thought into so small a volume of words.

The principal, Monsieur Roque, and the professors for the most part, were priests, adherents of Louis XVI., who had emigrated from France during the Revolution. They were men of learning, perfect purity of character, and above all narrowness of thought and action. I lived in the College, and was required to conform to its religious as well as its scholastic discipline; that is, I attended all the services in the chapel of the College during the six days in the week, and on Sunday marched with my fellow-students in procession, escorted by the professors, to the Cathedral Church in the city, to attend the celebration of Grand Mass. There were a few other students from the United States; yet no attempt was made, even by indirection, to influence our religious opinions. When I left the College to return to my home, Monsieur Roque, on taking leave of me, with strong and affectionate expressions

of interest in my future welfare, said to me, "You have, no doubt, noticed that we have never spoken to you on the subject of religion; but you know, from the frequency of our daily services, how essential to our salvation we consider it. We knew that your father was a Protestant, and it was as a Protestant child that he placed you with us for your education; and we should have been guilty of a breach of trust if we had sought to convert you from his way of thinking. But I trust, my dear child, that you will be a religious man, and that you will never allow a day to pass without thanking our Heavenly Father for his mercies to you, and asking his blessing on your future life." I need not say that I was deeply affected by this good man's parting words. The other priests—Houdet, Rivière, and Richards—took leave of me in the same affectionate manner, and I had a pleasant correspondence with several of them until the bonds between us were severed by their death. My conduct was satisfactory to them, and my proficiency in study was in advance of that of most of my fellow-students. Indeed, I was usually at the head of my class, or next to the head; and my instructors often encouraged me to exertion by telling me that I had talents, which, with diligent cultivation, would give me a distinguished career in life. I paid a visit to the College not long ago. It had been removed from a suburb on the river to the mountain which overlooks the city and gives it its name, Mont-réal. Of the *personnel* of the institution none remained but the porter, who was nearly a hundred years of age; and as my visit brought to my remembrance the good men who had sent out on the voyage of life hundreds of youths with so rich a freight of well-formed habits and pure counsels, it suggested with striking vividness a thought which has recently by a popular author been moulded into a beautiful and just tribute to the unobtrusive labors of some of the world's best benefactors and guides: "The growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been is half owing to the num-

ber who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs."*

The year 1812 is made memorable in our history by the declaration of war against Great Britain. Wearied with her long-continued depredations on our commerce and her insults to our flag, Congress began early in the year to prepare for seeking redress by an appeal to arms, and by passing an act to raise a large military force. I was then nearly fourteen years of age, and had been fifteen months in College. My father intended that I should remain there another year; but in view of the threatening aspect of our relations with Great Britain he determined to withdraw me, and wrote that he would call for me and take me with him to Quebec, which he wished to see.† Before he could execute his purpose he re-

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* My father's stay at the College of Montreal, though brief, was not without a strong and lasting influence on his life. He held the place, and the venerable and devoted priests, in loving and grateful remembrance, and delighted to recall incidents connected with the time spent under their care. I remember, in particular, his account of the Easter service in the chapel; and how he would repeat, and sing to the old plain song tune, the hymn which the school-boys sung that day:

"O Filii et Filiæ,
Rex cœlestis, Rex gloriæ
Morte surrexit hodie,
Alleluia! Alleluia!"

The visit to his old Alma Mater, to which he modestly alludes, was made in the year 1865, when he was a major-general in the United States service, and Commander of the Department of the East. Being in Montreal on business of the Government, he was invited to the College, and received there with every attention and honor. My father had nothing of that strong feeling against the Roman Catholic Church which was, and is, so marked a feature in the Puritans and their descendants. He had devoted friends and lovers among its people; when he lay ill prayers were offered for him daily in more than one religious house, and, after his death, the holy sacrifice was tenderly offered on their altars for the repose of his soul.

† "Boscawen, May, 12, 1812.

"My dear Boy,—I have written to Mr. Peterson to make preparations

ceived the appointment of major in the army, and sent me a summons to return home immediately. I had hardly reached the frontier when war was declared, and all citizens of the United States over fourteen years of age were ordered to leave Canada, or take the oath of allegiance to Great Britain. It was a source of great regret to my father, and has always been to me, that my studies in this excellent institution were thus abruptly and prematurely terminated. I spoke French with tolerable fluency, and had acquired a perfect accent, but another year was needed to enable me to write and speak it with the same freedom as my native tongue. No child ever had greater cause for thankfulness to a parent than I had to my father for his untiring efforts to give me a superior education.*

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for your return the last of this month; am very sorry that my business is such as to prevent me from coming for you. I had anticipated much pleasure from an idea of the journey. Adams, you will be careful of yourself, your trunks, etc., on your journey. You must have a trunk that will hold your books and clothes, and they must be stowed perfectly close and crowded very hard, otherwise when you travel in the stages your things will be worn to a chowder; very particular attention is necessary in this respect when journeying in stages. Doct. Shattuck is desirous that you should be at Boston in the month of June, otherwise I should not have sent for you until you could have had Mr. Peterson's company. I am not without hopes, however, that you will still have his or that of some other acquaintance or gentleman travelling this way. Adams, do not fail to tender my warmest thanks and your own to your worthy governors and tutors, for their paternal care and kind attention to you. Am in haste, my dear boy,

"Your affectionate Father, T. Dix, Jr.

"John Adams Dix."

* The following letter, addressed to his father by Monsieur Roque, the head of the seminary, is a testimonial to the merit of the student and the fidelity of the teachers:

"Monsieur,—Je ne répondis point dans le tems à la lettre par laquelle vous m'annonciez votre fils, parcequ'il me dit que vous n'auriez point à portée quelqu'un pour la traduire. Maintenant il la traduira lui-même. Il possède passablement la langue françoise, et il auroit encore mieux réussi si sa santé n'avait pas été dérangée de tems en tems. Malgré

On my return from Montreal I was sent to Boston, and placed in the family of Dr. George Cheyne Shattuck, a distant relative of the family, and one of the most eminent physicians of that city. My father was first appointed to the New Hampshire Regiment, which was to form a part of the new levies; but the numerical force of the regiments having been reduced from two thousand to one thousand men, he was transferred to the corps to be raised in Maryland, and was ordered to Baltimore to recruit his battalion.* It was

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cela, il a occupé les plus hautes places dans sa classe. On l'a appliqué au françois, au Latin, et à la géographie. J'ai reconnu en lui du talent, et j'ai été satisfait de sa conduite. Mr. Peterson m'a offert vos remercîments. Pour moi, je désire que cet enfant vraiment interessant réussisse dans son éducation, et que le peu que nous avons fait pour lui contribue à en faire un honnête homme et un bon Chrétien.

"J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec considération, Monsieur,

"Votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

"ROQUE,

"P^tre. direct^r. du petit séminaire.

"Montréal, 23 Mai, 1812."

* Major Dix was very restless at being kept in Baltimore on the dull business of recruiting. He wrote to the Secretary of War as follows:

"Baltimore, October 17, 1812."

"Hon. WM. EUSTIS, *Secretary of War:*

"SIR,—At the time I accepted an appointment in the army I was in daily expectation of a war with Great Britain. A zealous desire to take an active part in avenging the wrongs of our much-injured and degraded country, and a desire of distinction as a soldier, were my inducements for entering the lists. I have now for five months been actively engaged in the recruiting service, and could I suppose that the interest of my country would be promoted by my continuance in this service, I would be silent still. But, Sir, the season is far advanced; it is impossible to raise recruits fast here, or in this vicinity; it is not probable that more than another company can be sent from here in time to serve in this year's campaign; the troops which are to go from here next week will be in season to see actual service, and so strong is my inclination to proceed with them that I know not how to be reconciled to remain. Could I be assured that 'the battles would not all be fought and the laurels all gathered' the present campaign, I would content myself to stay. But, Sir, if it is the expectation and intention to force as far as possible into

under these circumstances that Dr. Shattuck took charge of me. He spared time from an extensive practice to hear my recitations in Latin, and he engaged several personal friends to give me instruction in other studies. Nathan Hale, editor of the *Boston Advertiser*, gave me lessons in mathematics; Señor Sales, afterward Professor of Modern Languages at Harvard University, in Spanish; and Captain Morse, of the new levies, a tragedian of some note at that period, who had just received his commission, and was recruiting his company, in elocution. It was the latter who, as has been mentioned previously in these memoirs, gave my father a flattering account of my progress under his tuition. I was unquestionably greatly benefited by his instruction. Whether it would have been of a different character if he had been preparing me for the stage, I cannot say. But there was nothing in his teachings which had the least savor of the dramatic. It was the calmness and dignity of the forum, which he took pains to impress on me as characteristic of the highest order of oratory.*

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the enemy's lines this season, I beseech you that I may not be left behind. I have the honor to be, etc., T. Dix, Jr.,

"Major, 14th Regiment U. S. Infantry."

His services, however, were deemed of too much importance to be dispensed with, and he was required to remain.

* "Baltimore, October 3, 1812.

"Adams, my dear Boy,—You are, I conclude, pursuing your studies with as much zeal as your health will allow of. Should you attend to mathematics more than one quarter, I wish you may at the same time attend to elocution with Mr. Morse, provided he is in Boston and can attend you. In case you cannot have his instruction, probably there is some other person you can have. I wish you to commence the study of the Spanish language soon; I think four or six weeks more at mathematics will be as much as will be profitable at present. You ought occasionally to look into your Greek and Latin books. I have written to Dr. Shattuck on the subject of your studies.

"Your affectionate Father, Timothy Dix, Major,

"14th Regt. U. S. Infantry,

"Baltimore, Maryland.

"N.B.—Address your letters as above."

The six months which I passed under the direction of these accomplished gentlemen were months of unceasing labor, and the habits of application which I acquired were of infinite service to me in after-life. Certainly, no young man of my age could have had advantages superior to mine; and when thrown upon my own unassisted exertions, a few years later, I often felt that I had not profited by them as I might have done if I had appreciated them at the time as I ought. But I had become possessed with so strong a desire to go into the military service, that I was becoming indifferent to my studies, and Dr. Shattuck advised my father to gratify me.* The lat-

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* With what reluctance Dr. Shattuck consented may be inferred from the following letter, which my father preserved with the utmost care, and gave to me, years ago, for safe keeping:

"DEAR SIR,—I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of yours in relation to Adams' going to the army. While my mind is filled with regret that a lad of such promise is to be surrounded with temptations almost too heavy not to canker his present unexceptionable habits of industry and virtue, some solace is found in the expectation that he will be pretty constantly guarded by a father's vigilance. Your son has a genius which quite as well qualifies him for excellence in the civil as the military department; and the civil department holds up more splendid records for the exercise of great talents than are to be found in the military of a Republic which is little liable to invasion. These remarks are founded on the *possible* influence of an acquaintance in the army to give your son an unconquerable predilection for a military life, which, if there be stability in our republican institutions, could promise no man of talents any adequate reward. Capt. Ebenezer Morse says Adams possesses uncommon constitutional facilities for becoming an orator—the forum, not the camp, is the place for the *gift of tongues*. I hope you will not relinquish the idea of his becoming a graduate at some respectable university, and that you will encourage him in gaining an extended knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages and of mathematics, before he may go to the university. The Hon. J. Q. Adams is said to have translated (on paper) the classics into English, which, at the same time it directed his attention to the critical comprehension of the learned languages, gave him great facility in English composition. Your son has translated into English the orations of Cicero, which he has studied while at our house. I submit it to your serious consideration whether Adams would not be

ter, who wished me to go to college, and then embrace one of the learned professions, did everything in his power to discourage me; and it was not until I had actually filled up and signed a blank enlistment, and asked him to let me go into the service as a common soldier, that he gave way. When the Senators from New Hampshire, recommended him for a major's appointment he wrote to the Secretary of War that he would not refuse a captaincy, if he could not have a higher rank, and that he was determined to go into the service, even if he had to go as volunteer.* I asked him whether so patriotic an example by the father ought not to be followed by the son. He had no answer to such a home question, and finally told me he would endeavor to procure for me the appoint-

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advantaged by making a careful written translation of all the Latin and Greek classics he may study.

"Adams has pledged his word that all his time (not necessarily devoted to the study of military tactics) shall be consumed in the study of languages and mathematics. That you may be prospered in all your laudable undertakings, but especially your efforts to train Adams to a high degree of honorable usefulness, is the earnest wish of, Sir, your friend and servant, GEO. C. SHATTUCK.

"TIMOTHY DIX, Esquire.

"Boston, January 17, 1812."

* The following is a copy of the letter referred to. It is uncertain to whom it was addressed, but probably to one of the Senators from New Hampshire, at Washington:

"Boscawen, February 24, 1812.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 5th instant has just come to hand. Could I be assured that my only destination would be a descent on the Canadas, I would accept the command of a company, or even less. In fact, I am determined, in such an event, to go in some capacity, if it should be that of a private volunteer. But I have no notion of being concerned in any long, lazy establishment, or in an idle Oxford war, or even in a stationary guard for our seaboard fortifications. An idea that I might be of some use to my country in case of a descent on Canada, was my motive for proposing myself as a candidate for a field-office; and, actuated by the same motive, I will not refuse an inferior command, provided you are confident this will be my only destination. In any other I am sure I could not be useful. Yours truly,

"TIMO. DIX, JR."

ment of cadet. To satisfy him how well qualified I was to endure the hardships of a campaign, I availed myself of the opportunity, while visiting friends twenty-eight miles out of Boston, to walk into the city between breakfast and tea, with a crust of bread in my pocket, greatly to the distress of my legs and the disturbance of my digestion for the next three or four days. The cadet's appointment came at last:

"War Department, December 11, 1812.

"SIR,—Herewith enclosed you will receive the appointment of Cadet in the Service of the United States; on receipt of which you will please to communicate your acceptance or non-acceptance, and in case of accepting, you will report yourself to Major Dix, of the 14th Infantry, and receive his orders. Respectfully,

"W. EUSTIS.

"Cadet J. A. DIX, Boston."

Accompanying this was the following letter:

"Baltimore, December 14, 1812.

"MON CHER FILS,—You will find herewith an appointment which will doubtless be gratifying to you. I must, however, caution you against being too much gratified. I really have many doubts whether it will or will not eventually be for your advantage.

"You will not by any means suffer it to interrupt your literary pursuits. In fact, *mon cher fils*, you must 'double your diligence,' and the zeal of your exertions for useful knowledge must be limited only by a regard for your health.

"Should you think proper to accept the appointment, something like the enclosed will be proper for your answer to the Secretary of War; copy it handsomely on a good sheet of letter paper, and enclose it in another thick paper. I shall write you again and give you some directions. You will write to me immediately on receipt of this.

"Am in much haste, *mon cher fils*,

"Your affectionate Father, T. D., JR.

"J. A. D."

In pursuance of this exhortation to renewed diligence I had no sooner reached Baltimore than my father entered my name as a day-scholar in St. Mary's College; and in the evening, and often before school-hours in the morning, I assisted

him in his duties as a recruiting officer.* With these combined occupations I think I was as diligently employed during the ensuing three months as I had ever been at any period of my life.

In March, 1813, my father's battalion and two or three additional companies were ready for the field, and he took me with him to Washington, to close his recruiting accounts.†

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* There were other duties in addition to these. In the latter part of the year 1812 the towns in the Chesapeake were threatened by the British fleet, and Major Dix was, in addition to his duties at Baltimore, charged with the command of Annapolis, forty miles distant. The following letter, written by him to the Adjutant-general, shows his activity and devotion to the public service:

"Baltimore, December 14, 1812.

"Sir,—After parting with the Secretary of War you permitted me to make my election whether to go to Annapolis myself, or send one of my captains. On considering all circumstances I think it most advisable to do both; that is, I will repair to Annapolis immediately, and take charge of the forts. I can, without injury to the recruiting rendezvous, take sixty-five recruits and a captain with me. I will spend Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays (and Thursdays, if thought necessary) at the forts, and the remaining time at Baltimore.

"... I will call my son (John A. Dix), lately appointed a cadet, who is subject to my order, here immediately, to serve me as a clerk. He is capable, honest, and faithful; may receive all communications in my absence, and transmit me by mail to Annapolis, immediately, copies of such as are necessary. ... It will make my task a little more arduous, but I am willing to undertake it. I have a horse that will carry me to Annapolis in four hours; therefore do not value the travelling.

"However, this or any other arrangement that may be considered advisable will be promptly attended to.

"I have the honor to be, etc., T. Dix,
"Major, 14th Regiment U. S. Infantry.

"T. H. Cushing, Esq., Adjutant-general."

† "Baltimore, March 3, 1813.

"Sir,—You will doubtlessly blame me for not writing you sooner, but I have been very much engaged since I have been here, and have had time to write home but once.

"On my arrival here I found I had more to do than I had imagined. My father, besides inspecting the accounts of all the officers in his dis-

He presented me as a newly-appointed cadet to General Armstrong, the Secretary of War, who said to me, "So you are going to the Military Academy; what preparation have you made?" I told him what my studies had been during the two preceding years, and what progress I had made in French, Spanish, mathematics, and the classics, when he said, "Well, young gentleman, I think there is not much for you to learn at West Point, except military tactics. How would you like to go to the frontier?" I replied, of course, that I should be delighted. "Then," said he, "if your father will consent, I will give you an ensign's commission." The consent was

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trict, has six returns to make out every week, duplicates of which he forwards to the Adjutant-general at Washington; has the command of two forts at Annapolis; and has to receive and deliver clothing, money, etc., to all the recruiting officers in Maryland and the District of Columbia.

"I am kept continually on the run or delivering clothing to the officers. I have been to Washington, Annapolis, and Georgetown, and expect to go to Annapolis again in a short time.

"My father has been very much engaged for a week in sending a detachment of men to the lines, consisting of three companies of infantry and one of riflemen, under the command of Colonel Winder.

"They will march for Albany to-morrow, and there will receive further orders, which will probably be to join General Dearborn's army.

"By the short description which I have given you of the situation of our affairs you will easily discover that I have but little time to study, but depend that *little* shall be well employed. When the men are gone and affairs a little settled, I shall write to Miss Williams and Mr. Doane.

"I am very sorry for having incurred perhaps your displeasure for not writing sooner, but I shall be more punctual in future, as I shall have less to do, and more of my time also will be devoted to my studies.

"It is impossible to fix upon any number of hours to study, as on some days I have eight or ten hours, and on others not more than two or three. I shall not go to Annapolis to study, as I expected to do when I left Boston, but shall continue here to assist my father until he marches to Canada, which will be at the end of spring.

"Please to present my respects to Mrs. Derby, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Shattuck, Miss Williams, Mr. Doane, Mr. West, and Capt. Morse.

"Your humble servant, JOHN ADAMS DIX.

"DR. GEO. C. SHATTUCK."

obtained, and on the 8th of March, 1813, when I lacked four months of being fifteen years of age, I was appointed an ensign in the Fourteenth Regiment of U. S. Infantry, and joined the army, at Sackett's Harbor, in the following April, a few days after General Jacob Brown, then a militia officer, and afterward Commander-in-chief of the army, repulsed an attack by the British forces, and the naval commander, despairing of the result, burnt all the naval and military stores captured the previous autumn at Little York, now Toronto.*

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* "Sackett's Harbor, August 8, 1813.

"HONORED SIR,—You will pardon my long silence when I inform you what has been my employment, and how much I have been engaged since I wrote you last; shortly after which I received the appointment of an ensign in the Fourteenth Regiment. About the same time my father received orders to collect his troops, and prepare himself to march to the lines. To do this, settle his accounts with the officers, organize the troops, and prepare for the march, occupied our time day and night, till we marched, on the 26th of May. I left the College at Baltimore with some reluctance. My prospects for improvement were tolerable, and I had formed several acquaintances with young gentlemen of the College which were interesting; among them was young Bonaparte, and several others of the best families in Baltimore.

"Our march from Baltimore to this place was very pleasant. On arriving at West Point my father, two or three of the officers, and myself went on shore, visited the old forts, the Military Academy, etc., etc.

"The forts were out of repair, but were to be repaired immediately. There were but seventeen scholars at the Academy; about fifty more were expected in a few weeks. Captain Partridge, of the Engineers, had command of the post. A lieutenant from Massachusetts was the second in command. These were the only officers there.

"The lieutenant has been in the service two or three years; said he was at Cambridge College with you. We were treated with great politeness by both of the officers.

"I had the pleasure at Utica to find my old friend and correspondent Kirkland, whom you have often heard me mention. He is now a member of the Hamilton College. His father is a wealthy, respectable lawyer. My father halted the troops one day at Utica. I spent the whole time with Kirkland at his father's, and on a visit to the College.

"The College is in Clinton, a considerable large village, eight or nine

Shortly after my arrival an independent battalion was organized, consisting of nine companies, and placed under the command of Major Timothy Upham, of the Twenty-first U. S. Infantry, who appointed me his adjutant. From June to October this portion of the army was in entire inaction. It was then united with the troops which had been acting on the Niagara frontier, and the combined force was placed under the command of General Wilkinson for the expedition against

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miles from Utica. It is situated on a hill, about half of a mile from the centre of the village. It is of wood—three stories high, and appears very elegant from the village. There were but twenty or thirty scholars there, but the number is fast increasing.

"We parted with some reluctance, I assure you, though with the promise of writing one another once a week.

"My attention is at present somewhat engaged with military affairs, and I am very much pleased with the employment, I assure you, but believe I shall not lose my relish for civil society. I am attached to a company, and do my share of all the duties. I spend two or three hours each day in the Adjutant-general's office as an assistant. This will afford me an opportunity of understanding all the details of an army. The Adjutant-general is a smart, active, vigilant, and experienced officer, and possesses very brilliant talents.

"I will mention a circumstance which, I fancy, will please you. My father, before he would permit me to accept my appointment, required me to give him a bond under hand and seal obligating me to 'remain in the service no more than two years, then to leave the army and finish my studies, unless I should obtain his permission; or, in case of his decease, Dr. Shattuck's permission to remain a longer time.'

"I brought with me a number of school-books, which I attend to two or three hours each day. I shall endeavor, therefore, to hold my ground at least in literature.

"My father sends his respects to your family. Please to present mine to Mrs. Derby's and Mr. West's families, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Shattuck, Mademoiselle Williams, Monsieur Doane, etc.

"*Votre très-humble serviteur*,

"J. A. Dix.

"Dr. Geo. C. Shattuck.

"N.B.—Please to direct a letter to 'Ensign John A. Dix, 14th Regt., U. S. Inf., Sackett's Harbor, N. Y.'"

Montreal, in which General Hampton was to co-operate with an army concentrated at Plattsburg. The movement disastrously failed, from a want of harmony between these two jealous commanders.

Among the officers from my native State there were two who were as distinguished for their eccentricity as they were conspicuous for their coolness and courage in battle. One was Major James Miller, of the Twenty-first Regiment of Infantry. In the battle of Uragona, or Lundy's Lane, as it was commonly called, the British army occupied a height defended by guns, by which our troops were greatly annoyed. General Brown rode up to Major Miller, who was at the head of his battalion, and, pointing to the height, said, "Major, can you take that battery?" The major's prompt reply was, "I'll try, sir." He put his battalion in motion, and when about half-way up the height the guns opened on him, and about twenty men at the head of the column fell. There was a moment of wavering; when the major, putting himself in front, and waving his sword, called out, "Come along, boys; what are you afeared of? Nobody wants to hurt you!" His speech was like an electric spark, and before the guns were reloaded they were in our possession.

The other was Lieutenant-colonel McNeil, of the same regiment. He was six feet six inches in height, and better proportioned than most men of his stature. He was shot in the knee in the same battle and lamed for life. After the war he was on a certain occasion at Concord, at the opening of the session of the Legislature. The general was proud of his lameness, and took it for granted that every man, woman, and child in New Hampshire knew how it happened. While limping about in front of the Capitol a fresh member of the Legislature, not much more than five feet high, was introduced to him. The little fellow, as full of his own importance as the general, putting his arms a-kimbo, said, "General, I am very glad to make your acquaintance: how did you get hurt?" The general, drawing himself up his full height,

and looking down upon his interrogator with supreme contempt, replied, "I fell through a barn-floor, you devilish fool! Did you never read the history of your country?"

Both these officers were brevetted for gallant conduct, and were known throughout the State as Generals Miller and McNeil.

I now approach the most trying period of my life. My father had an attack of fever, and was in a very feeble state when the movement down the St. Lawrence commenced. The surgeon of his regiment urged him not to join in it, and General Wilkinson offered to leave him in command of Sackett's Harbor. But his regiment, a part of which had been on the Niagara frontier, was now concentrated, and the lieutenant-colonel commanding having been captured by the enemy, the command devolved on him, and he refused to give it up to a junior in rank. The descent of the river by our army was unopposed until the morning of the 11th of November. It had bivouacked the evening of the 9th on the Canadian side, near the head of the Long Sault Rapid. It was followed by a number of British gun-boats, which had hung upon our rear after passing Fort Prescott, opposite Ogdensburg. My father's regiment constituted the rear-guard The afternoon of the 10th he had been seized with a sudden and severe attack of pneumonia, and was carried from his boat to a house on the bank of the river. At daybreak on the 11th the enemy's gun-boats appeared, and for the first time opened their fire upon us; and my recollection is that the commander of the brigade, General Swartwout, ordered the troops to embark and fall farther down. My father's disease had made such rapid progress that he was unable to walk, and he was borne by two of his officers (Lieutenants Parker and Bennett) and myself to his boat. Lieutenant Parker was killed the following spring in the ill-advised attack on La Calle Mill, near Plattsburg; Lieutenant Bennett survived the war, and became a paymaster in the army. I mention their names, because they are inseparably connected in my memory with my

father's last appearance at the head of his regiment. The battle of Chrystler's Field commenced soon after the rear-guard had fallen down the river about a mile from the point at which it was attacked, and where the farther advance of the enemy's gun-boats had been checked. I was now but little over a mile from the field, and the roar of the artillery and the incessant report of fire-arms were too much for me to resist. Learning from the surgeon that my father was in no immediate danger, I collected, without a word to any one, about twenty of the men who had been employed as oarsmen, furnished them with arms and ammunition, and started for the field. I had marched about half the distance when I met Major Nourse—aide-de-camp, I think, to General Wilkinson—who was escorting a number of prisoners just captured, and he ordered me to take charge of them and return to the boats. I entreated him to let me go on; but he was inexorable, as he said the guard with them was much more likely to be serviceable than my hastily gathered squad, and I had to turn back. He said afterward that I cried because I was not allowed to go into the fight. It is not unlikely. I do not remember the tears; but I shall never forget my disappointment and vexation. It was, no doubt, for the best; for I might not have returned to afford my father the consolation of my presence in the last hours of his life, and receive his dying messages to the other members of his family. The only object of the British commander in making the attack on the rear of our army—for a portion of it had the day before moved down to Cornwall, at the foot of the Long Sault—was to harass and annoy us. He could have had no hope of arresting, or even of retarding materially, our advance. The result was a hotly-contested battle-field, the loss of a few hundred men on both sides, and a mutual claim to the honors of a disputed victory. We passed the night on the banks of the river, and the next day descended the rapid without farther molestation, and joined our advanced forces at Cornwall. There intelligence was received from Hampton's division

which led to the abandonment of the expedition against Montreal, and the army went into winter-quarters at French Mills, on Salmon River. I pass over the last two days of my painful experience. On arriving at Cornwall, after the descent of the Long Sault, I was relieved from duty, and summoned to my father, whose recovery was declared to be hopeless. He was confined to the close cabin of a decked boat, and died in it a few hours after our arrival at French Mills. His death was that of a Christian and a soldier. Niles's *Weekly Register*, the principal statistical publication of the day, had the following paragraph:

"Colonel Dix, of the Fourteenth Regiment, a very valuable officer, died of an inflammation of the lungs on the morning of the 14th."

And with this brief notice passed into oblivion, except in the remembrance of his family and acquaintances, a most intelligent, enterprising, and patriotic citizen, of elevated tastes and aims, of perfect integrity, and, as Mr. Webster once said to me when we were members of the United States Senate, "one of the most gentlemanly men I ever knew."

Major Upham, of the Twenty-first Regiment of Infantry, who had appointed me adjutant of his independent battalion at Sackett's Harbor, urged me to obtain a transfer to his regiment; and having procured a furlough, I returned with him to New Hampshire, my native State, to aid in settling my father's affairs, which were hopelessly embarrassed. They were soon closed, and my step-mother removed, with my brothers and sisters, eight in number, to Massachusetts. Early in the spring of 1814 I reported for duty to Major Upham, and was soon afterward ordered to Fort Constitution, at the entrance of the harbor of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The Navy-yard at this port made the station one of leading importance, and the command of the forts by which it was defended was intrusted to Colonel J. B. Walbach, who had received his military education in the Austrian service, and had distinguished himself by his gallantry as Adjutant-general at the battle of

Chrystler's Farm. In the course of the summer the force occupying the forts and the adjoining grounds numbered about twenty-five hundred men.

A British fleet was on the coast, and an attack was confidently expected. But it was not made, and the war closed with the Treaty of Ghent, in February, 1815. Colonel Walbach appointed me his adjutant, and I served in that capacity until the garrisons were put on a peace establishment, when I was assigned to company duty. I remained under his command until 1818. During these three years I was an assiduous student, chiefly of history and the classics. For this industrious occupation of my time I was greatly indebted to the friendship of Captain Fabius Whiting, an accomplished officer, and to an occasional letter of encouragement from Dr. Shattuck, whose friendship I enjoyed to the close of his life. Colonel Walbach was a most rigid disciplinarian, and for several years after the termination of hostilities kept the garrison, in everything but numbers, on a war-footing, though there was not an enemy within thousands of miles. An officer of the guard was regularly detailed, and was compelled to sit up all night. My turn came about once a week. We had a guard-book, in which we were required, in order to insure our watchfulness, to record the state of the weather at every hour of the night. This book was submitted to the colonel's inspection by the officer of the guard every morning, and at Captain Whiting's suggestion I undertook to break the monotony of the registration, which was as barren as a ship's log on a smooth voyage, by quotations from the poets. It was not without some apprehension of a rebuke from the colonel that I handed him the book in the morning, with the following notes on a gathering storm, and on the coming of the dawn:

"The weary clouds, slow meeting, mingle into solid gloom."

"Aurora now, fair daughter of the dawn,
In rosy lustre gilds the dewy lawn."

I incline to the belief that this is the first instance in which a guard-book has been enlivened by poetical annotations on the phenomena of the atmosphere. It was an agreeable relief when the colonel, after devoting more time to the inspection of it than usual, handed it back to me, with a grim smile, without saying a word.

I commenced at this early period a practice from which I have derived the greatest benefit—that of committing to writing the impressions I received from all I read. The benefit was twofold. It served to fix more durably in my memory the facts and the ideas which I deemed most valuable; and it tended to give me a freedom of style, which was of infinite advantage when I became actively engaged in the business of life. I was not in the habit of submitting these critiques and compendiums (for my compositions took both forms) even to friendly criticism; and in looking into them after the lapse of years I found the earlier ones abounding in verbiage, and running into a turgidity of style which gradually disappeared as I became familiar with the best English writers, and especially as my acquaintance with the Roman authors grew more intimate. From the latter I made copious quotations, and was in the habit of using them quite freely at a later period, when I became a writer for the periodical press. I think it safer for very young writers to err on the side of inflation than severity of style; for while good taste eventually chastises and corrects the former, the latter is almost certain to run into meagreness and inelegance. For this reason the pruning of youthful compositions should be guided by a prudent forbearance on the part of instructors.

The years which followed my father's death were full of anxiety and trial for me. As I have said, his affairs had become hopelessly embarrassed, and his large family were left with very inadequate means of support. With the small salary which I derived from my commission I nevertheless, by rigid economy, was able to contribute something to eke out their annual income; and I think this necessity, which render-

ed it impossible for me to take part in amusements and social indulgences requiring the expenditure of money, served to make my devotion to study more unremitting. I owe much to the habits of economy thus forced upon me for years, and engrafted on me, as it were, in my youth. One of their inseparable accompaniments is a dread of debt. It has accompanied me through life. During the sixteen years of my service in the army I only once made a loan. I borrowed one hundred dollars of a friend in an emergency, and repaid him in less than two months. Another accompaniment equally inseparable, and equally important in an economical as well as a moral sense, is never to use for a single day a single dollar paid into our hands for others. In the financial trusts confided to me I have never violated in any instance for a single hour this cardinal rule of fiduciary obligation. How much of personal dishonor would have been preserved from taint, how much of distress and mortification have been spared, if this rule were generally respected!

A year or two after the close of the war my step-mother received a pension, as the widow of an officer who had lost his life in the military service; and as my sisters grew up they married, and the condition of the family became free from care.

While Colonel Walbach was in command at Portsmouth the artillery arm of the military service was organized as a corps, and I was transferred to it from the Twenty-first Regiment of Infantry. It was subsequently divided into four regiments, and Colonel House, a most accomplished officer and a perfect gentleman, became the commander of the regiment, formed out of the companies in the Eastern States. He appointed me his adjutant, and after a year I was again placed on company service, and was assigned to the command of Fort Washington, on the Potomac, opposite Mount Vernon, at the close of the year 1818, while the fortification was in process of construction. I was there but a few months. Another staff appointment—that of regimental quarter-master—took me to Fort Columbus, in the Harbor of New York, in January, 1819.

In the month of March following I was appointed aide-de-camp to Major-general Jacob Brown, then in command of the Northern Military Department of the United States, while Major-general Andrew Jackson, afterward President of the United States, commanded the Southern. From the close of the War of 1812—in February, 1814—I had been for the most part in garrison and a diligent student. As one of General Brown's military family my life underwent a radical change. I was from that moment involved for a portion of the year in all the activities, excitements, and indulgences of fashionable society. The presence of the general, whose distinguished military career ranked him among the first of American commanders, was eagerly sought, and I remember my first appearance on his staff was at a brilliant assemblage of the beauty, talent, and wealth of the city of New York at the house of one of its most conspicuous citizens. I was declining to allow him to present me to one of the belles of the city, renowned for her wit as well as her grace, because, as I said, I was afraid I might be expected to ask her to dance, an accomplishment I had not then acquired. I was not aware that she was standing so close to us that she could not help overhearing our conversation. With her readiness to meet emergencies she turned toward us, and, addressing the general, said, "General, if you were to ask me to dance, I should be under the painful necessity of refusing you, for I am engaged for the rest of the evening." In the midst of my confusion he presented me, and it was the beginning of an acquaintance which ripened into a lasting friendship.

The general passed his winters in Washington, and his summers, excepting when he was engaged in tours of inspection, at Brownville, Jefferson County. We set out immediately for his home, and at Albany he was again intercepted, to dine with De Witt Clinton, then Governor of the State, whose dignified and commanding presence made an impression on me which I have never forgotten. My awe might have been somewhat diminished if I could have looked forward half a

century and seen myself occupying the same distinguished position.

Brownville was a quiet, pleasant village of very moderate dimensions. The inhabitants consisted chiefly of the laboring classes, with two or three families only of whom the general visited. After testing my capacity by giving me two or three despatches to write, he intrusted to me nearly all of his general official correspondence; yet in a country village, free from social exactions, I still had a good deal of time at my disposal, and I did not fail to avail myself of it to pursue my studies. The prospect of a long peace seemed to me to afford little opportunity for gaining distinction, and I decided to commence the study of the law, with a view to resign my military commission and engage in civil pursuits. I commenced, like most law students, with the inevitable Blackstone, and, with some friendly counsel from the village lawyer, I made very respectable progress in my new undertaking during the two summers I was under his supervision. The winters I passed in Washington, gaining more and more knowledge of the world, and becoming acquainted with most of the distinguished men of that day, but with little respite from the social exigencies incident to my position for study and military duty. My name, however, was entered in the office of William Wirt, the Attorney-general of the United States, and under his friendly auspices I was admitted to the Bar of the District of Columbia, although never engaged in practice there. My most familiar association was with Mr. Calhoun, then Secretary of War under Mr. Monroe's administration, and for several years after I left Washington a confidential correspondence was carried on between us. Political differences in 1828 estranged us; but we sat together in the United States Senate in 1846–'47, and with no diminution of our mutual respect and good-will.

Mr. Calhoun was a man of singular personal purity, and his charms of conversation were irresistible, particularly to young men, who always received from him especial kindness and

courtesy. His intellectual powers, the vicissitudes of his career, and his peculiar construction of the Constitution, form too large a theme for these reminiscences. He was a contemporary and a competitor with Webster and Clay for political honors, and a frequent antagonist with them in debate in the Senate of the United States; and it may be justly said that he came out of these encounters without forfeiting his claim to a place in the same plane of public distinction.

In the spring of —— I went with General Brown on an excursion into the interior of Virginia, the chief object of which was to pay a visit to Mr. Madison and Mr. Jefferson. Our first pause was at Montpelier, the residence of the former, in Orange County. It was under his administration that the general received the commission which laid the foundation of his military reputation, and I need not say that the meeting was a cordial one on both sides. We passed two days with him, charmed with his interesting and instructive conversation, the graceful and unaffected hospitality of his wife, and the devoted attention of his son, Payne Todd. Mr. Madison was of low stature and quiet manners, and with no physical traits to mark the eminence he had attained; but his conversation, though simple and unpretending, would soon have impressed one entirely ignorant of his political career with the conviction that he was a man of great intellectual power, with a large and varied experience in public affairs.

Mr. Jefferson, whose house (Monticello), in Albemarle County, we reached the night of the day on which we left Montpelier, contrasted strongly in person and manners with Mr. Madison. He was tall, dignified, and stately, less conversational, except when warmed by a congenial topic, but commenting with singular frankness and freedom on men as well as things. I cannot better illustrate this last trait than by repeating a remark in regard to Mr. Monroe, who was President of the United States from 1817 to 1825, and to whom, I believe, he was attached by a life-long friendship. "Monroe," he said, "was a man of remarkable judgment and

common-sense. If an object was placed before him he would be sure to reach it, but he could never tell you how he got there." He spoke of the family of Louis XVI. with great contempt, with an obvious sympathy with the French Revolution, apart from its atrocities. The leaning of Mr. Madison in the same direction may be referred, perhaps, without a forced construction to the fact that he gave a French name to his residence. Mr. Jefferson must unquestionably be considered, when his varied accomplishments are taken into account, the most remarkable man of his time. He was a natural philosopher, profoundly versed in political science, an accomplished musician, and a tasteful architect. His house, designed by himself, was a faultless specimen of Italian architecture. I was much addicted in my young days to drawing, and as I was finishing a sketch of it he came along, and, looking over my shoulder, said, much to my gratification, "Very exact." I believe this sketch furnished the illustration in Randall's Life of Jefferson. The preceding year, while at an evening party in New York, at which there was a good deal of music, Captain Bibby, the host, said to me, "I see you are very fond of music; do you play on any instrument?" I answered that I played a little on the violin. "That," said he, "was my instrument when I was a young man." He then told me that he was an aide-de-camp of the British General Frazer, who was killed at Saratoga a few days before the surrender of Burgoyne; that he was sent as a prisoner of war to Charlottesville, three miles from Monticello, and that he had played duets with Mr. Jefferson on the violin. He added, "Mr. Jefferson was one of the best amateur violinists I ever knew."

I mentioned this conversation to Mr. Jefferson, who remembered Captain Bibby perfectly; and he then told me he had practised four hours a day on the violin for ten years when he was a young man; that he had taken lessons of one of the first violinists in France while he was Minister at Paris, and that he gave up his violin when he became Secretary of State to General Washington. He added, "I wish I

had learned to play on the harpsichord, as my fingers are too stiff for the violin, for in that case I might have amused myself in my old age."

I was very much surprised at these personal revelations. I had practised on the violin two hours a day for five years, and was able to play music not very difficult. But I gave up my violin soon afterward, for I said to myself, "If Mr. Jefferson gave up his after so much more practice than I, I will act on his suggestion, and learn the piano sufficiently well to amuse myself." I did so; and I will add that I do not think I have ever lost any valuable time by studying music; for my practice has always been after full hours of labor, when I should otherwise have given myself up to lounging.

The winters I passed in Washington were prolific of exciting debates in Congress, to many of which I was an auditor. The one which was most fruitful of angry controversy, of wide-spread interest, of deep feeling, and even of fears in timid quarters for the preservation of the Union, was in regard to the admission of the State of Missouri into the Union, with a provision prohibiting slavery north of the latitude of 36° 30′. I was so fortunate as to hear the two speeches which, on opposite sides of the question, were considered the most able and are to this day the most noted—those of Mr. Pinkney of Maryland against the prohibition, and Rufus King of New York in favor of it. It would be difficult to conceive a greater contrast than that in the oratory of the two senators. Mr. King's was calm, dignified, argumentative, forcible, and at times fervid. Pinkney's was impassioned, fiery, and sometimes bordering on violence, but sustained throughout with surpassing logical power. It is generally conceded to have been the most effective effort of his life; and in the history of our public debates nothing, perhaps, is so much to be regretted as the fact that this speech was not fully reported. Rufus King responded in all respects to my conception of an old Roman senator, maintaining in his manner the quiet dignity appropriate to the undisputed masters of the greatest

empire of the ancient world. Mr. Pinkney seemed to me like one of the democratic orators of antiquity, whose aim it was to carry with them the passions as well as the convictions of the masses, by whom the movements of the government were swayed. I thought in one or two instances that the vehemence of the manner was disproportioned to the thought which it was intended to emphasize. For instance, I remember as he stood beside his seat he rushed forward three or four steps, and, with a tremendous *supplosio pedis*, one of the devices of ancient oratory, he pronounced the words, "Distance is a mighty engine!" Untrained as I was at that time in the school of oratory, it struck me that the sentiment, separated from the accessary, did not justify so passionate an utterance. But of the immense power of the orator and his finished delivery no listener could entertain a doubt.

One of the chief celebrities of the time when I was hibernating in Washington was John Randolph of Roanoke. He was as remarkable in his dress as he was in physical characteristics. Tall, lean, straight as an arrow, his ungainly walk was made more conspicuous by a jockey-cap and a cape over a long surtout.

Willard's Hotel, on the Pennsylvania Avenue, near the Treasury Department, was then known as Strothers'. It was the chief hotel in the city, and contained many of the most distinguished members of both Houses of Congress. Mr. Van Buren, Louis McLane, and General Van Rensselaer of Albany, known as the Patroon, had then parlors which were fashionable resorts in the evening. The most frequented of these places of meeting was that of John D. Dickinson, a member of the House of Representatives, from Troy, N. Y. His daughter, an only child—afterward the wife of Ogle Tayloe, of Washington—made it particularly attractive by her charming manners and conversation, as well as by her musical talent. I was then practising on the violin, and we played innumerable duets—generally by ourselves, but sometimes for the entertainment of others. Randolph was an occasional

visitor, and paid courtly attentions to the young lady—not with any hymeneal purpose, for, apart from the disparity of age, he was notoriously not a marrying man. One Saturday evening, when Mrs. Dickinson's parlor was thronged with the *élite* of the capital, the subject of conversation was Edward Everett, then a young Unitarian clergyman, who had come to Washington with a distinguished reputation as a pulpit orator, and whose friends had obtained permission for him to preach the following day in the Hall of the House of Representatives. Mr. Randolph came in when discussion was at its height. He took no part in it, until Mrs. Dickinson, turning to him, said, "Mr. Randolph, are you going to hear Mr. Everett to-morrow?" I remember well, as the hush of voices indicated the general interest in his answer, how a low murmur of mingled import ran through the room, as he replied, in a sententious fashion not unusual with him, and in his high-toned, squeaking voice, "Can't patronize Antichrist, madam." I did not know to what branch of the Christian Church he belonged; it was quite manifest that he was not unwilling to proclaim himself an uncompromising Trinitarian.

[Here my father's memoranda come abruptly to an end, and I must continue the work alone, to my great regret, and, no doubt, to that of the readers of the pages which follow.]

II.

THE ARMY.

WASHINGTON.–NEW YORK.–EUROPE.

A.D. 1821-1828.

Desire to Leave the Army. — Law Studies. — Presidential Campaign of 1824. — Admiration for Mr. Calhoun. — Contributions to Journals of the Period. — "Twelfth Night" Party at the Capital: Miss Wirt the Queen. — Ill-health. — Doctor Abernethy's Prescription for Dyspepsia. — Romance. — Madame Chégaraye's School. — John J. Morgan. — A Young *Débutante* at Washington. — Engagement. — 1826: Marriage to Catharine Morgan. — Special Messenger to Court of Denmark. — Tour through England. — Hamburg. — Holstein. — Copenhagen. — Travelling Post in Sweden. — Return Home. — Fortress Monroe: Trying Experiences in Virginia. — 1828: Resignation from the Military Service.

II.

My father's notes of his childhood and earlier years come down to 1821. That date is important, as foreshadowing the transition from the military service to the occupations of civil life. He has mentioned the strong opposition made to his entering the army, and how earnestly he was counselled to leave it as soon as a proper time should arrive. Inclining to this advice, he began, as early as the year 1819, to read law, and, although still in the military service, pursued his studies with a view to a change of profession. The design is stated in a letter to the Honorable Nathan Sanford, from which I make the following extract:

"Washington, January 31, 1823.

"My dear Sir,—I beg leave to congratulate you on your nomination to the office of Chancellor of New York, and on the certainty with which the confirmation is announced from all quarters. In this event no one will rejoice more sincerely than myself, and I trust you will enjoy a permanency of situation, of which the characteristic instability of New York politics would not in general authorize the expectation.

"In about two months I shall leave Washington for your city, and engage earnestly in the study of the law. I have already studied two years within the limits of the State; and when I shall have completed the legal term, and have so familiarized myself with the details of practice as to be justified in the belief that my industry will procure me a subsistence, I intend to present myself for admittance at the Bar, and divest myself of all my military connections."

The studies referred to were pursued at Brownsville, and elsewhere in the State of New York, and continued at Washington under the direction of William Wirt, Attorney-general of the United States.

Long before my father resigned his commission he had

become well known as an able controversialist and an intelligent critic of public affairs. It was natural that he should feel a deep interest in the politics of the day. He seems to have taken as active a part in them as was consistent with his position in the military service. The Presidential campaign which resulted in the election of John Quincy Adams, in the year 1824, was hotly contested. Five candidates were in the field: John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War under President Monroe; William H. Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury; John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State; Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives; and General Andrew Jackson. I shall have occasion again to refer to that remarkable canvass in connection with my father's political history; for the present it is sufficient to say that, like most of the gentlemen of the army, he was an enthusiastic admirer and staunch supporter of Mr. Calhoun, whose cause he advocated with a practised and facile pen. That distinguished statesman, in a letter to him from Washington, September 28, 1823, attests the value and importance of his work as a writer on public affairs:

"I write at present, not to communicate information (for I believe my friends in New York are well informed), but to express the pleasure which I have derived from the perusal of your letters. I see the cause begins to be supported as it ought to be in your city. Let the same spirit of free, bold, and enlightened discussion be extended to the other great cities, and the good effects will soon be visible. This can best be effected by correspondence."

Colonel Charles G. Haines, a member of the New York Bar, and a prominent politician of that day, writes to him about the same time, referring to certain articles from his pen:

"It is proper for me to remark that your essays have been republished very generally throughout the western country.* The junior editor of the *Statesman* informs me that they are

* *I. e.*, the western counties of the State of New York.

remarkably popular, and I have seen them reprinted in several of the Eastern papers. All this is gratifying to me. Any tribute to your genius gives me joy and pleasure."

I may add here that Colonel Haines was Adjutant-general of the State under Governor Clinton; that he and my father were warm friends and constant correspondents; and that, upon the death of Colonel Haines, my father wrote and published an obituary notice of him.

I have before me a large volume of newspaper cuttings, containing a striking proof of his industry. There are articles, published under divers *noms de plume*, in many of the leading journals of Washington, New York, and Albany, and comprising contributions on all kinds of subjects. In the columns of the *Washington Republican** and *National Intelligencer* he replies to criticisms on the economy and efficiency of the Secretary of War, and defends the department of which Mr. Calhoun was then the head from "gross and unfounded charges." In the *New York Statesman* for the years 1822 and 1823 may be found articles, under the signatures of "Pericles," "Amphion," and "Publicola," relating to the political state of Europe, finance, music, and the fine arts. He also gave a history of the Niagara campaign of 1812, in six successive numbers of that journal.† The *New York Patriot*‡ contains dissertations on the tariff, national defence, and agriculture and manufactures, together with a series of brilliant and caustic letters in which he paid special, and probably unwelcome, respects to Major Mordecai M. Noah. Did the space at my command permit it, I might justify, by reprinting several of these communications, the opinion that they display a maturity of thought and a polish of style, a force of logic and an amount of literary attainment remarkable in so young a man; and that they had much to do with establishing his reputation for brightness and ability, and preparing for the transition

* A.D. 1822, signed "X."

† A.D. 1822, signed "Cimon."

‡ A.D. 1823, signed "Fabius."

from the narrow sphere of the military profession to the broader field of political life. Meanwhile, he did not deem it beneath him to woo the Muse of Poetry, as is evident from the contents of another manuscript volume, filled with copies of verses which, no doubt, were highly appreciated by the fair ladies to whom most of them were addressed. There are acrostics and charades, monodies over the brevity of life, complimentary stanzas to reigning belles, and divers sportive effusions. Among these I find one headed with this memorandum:

"It has been customary in Washington, on the Twelfth-night of each year, to crown a queen, and it was the business of the king to address her majesty, and to impose her regal honors upon her head. In 1822 Miss Wirt (the daughter of the Attorney-general) was selected for queen, and I had the honor of being selected for king. The following address was delivered at her coronation, in full assembly of heads of departments, members of Congress, foreign ministers, etc."

Then follow verses such as might have been expected on the occasion, together with the queen's gracious reply to the king's address.

It touches the heart to read these little poems, now dim in the faded ink, and like withered leaves from which the color fled long since; yet it seems hardly worth while to give them a new life in these pages. Every youth has his dream-day, wherein he takes naturally to rhyming, and seeks to express in that form emotions that move the soul; but the era passes by, and with it, perhaps, might better perish the frail memorials of that transitory existence. The queen of the Twelfth-night, and her king, and all her court, are dust; the sound of their merriment was hushed long since; and now, in turning over these little compositions, one by one, I lose sight of the young soldier, and see him as he was forty-one years afterward, gray and weather-worn, and seated in his quarters at Fortress Monroe, overshadowed by the wide war-cloud, thinking of country and God, and translating the awful *Dies Iræ*, when the night-watch had been set, and his own night was far spent.

During those early years my father bore the cross of ill-health. His account of his varied miseries and trials is sufficiently entertaining to merit preservation, especially as it relates a characteristic interview with one of the most learned and eccentric of the medical profession in England. I take it from the *New York American*. It is headed by the ominous word "Dyspepsia," and begins as follows:

"Mr. Editor,—The multitude of counsellors on this prevailing infirmity, who have humanely been spreading before mankind the history of their experience, and laying down rules for our physical government, have so distracted their fellow-sufferers by a variety, and even a contrariety, of precept, that I consider it no more than charity to attempt the solution of all this apparent mystery in the treatment of the disease. In the first place, however, let us take a peep at my credentials. I have been a dyspeptic since the year 1813, and a confirmed one since 1820. The foundations of my complaint were laid during the campaign of 1813, by a slow fever, jaundice, and camp disease at Sackett's Harbor; by bad pork (*peste soit à messieurs les contracteurs!*); sleeping in swamps and mud-puddles, on General Wilkinson's celebrated movement down the St. Lawrence in the same year; and living in a tent at French Mills, latitude 44° N., until the 4th of December. From 1818 to 1825 I was five times salivated for the liver complaint—which I never had; my person was subjected by the first physicians of the country to every variety of process which the healing art (ah, much abused in name!) could devise, and at the end of that time I was discharged as incurable; and a host of leechers, cuppers, bleeders, and apothecaries, rife with my spoils, were turned off to prey upon other victims. I commenced travelling; exhausted my own country in novelty, from Maine to Florida, and from Lake Superior to Long Island Sound; traversed the Caribbean Sea, and luxuriated as well as a miserable invalid might amid its enchanting isles; crossed the Atlantic—'Mutatis terris quantum oculis'—visited almost every civilized country in Europe, and finally drew up in despair at the den of that medical bear, as the world has grossly miscalled him, Mr. Abernethy, of London. He received me with great civility, heard a few words of my story, and cut me short as follows:

"'Sir, you are pretty far gone, and the wonder is you are not gone entirely. If you had consulted common-sense instead of the medical faculty you would probably have been well years ago. I can say nothing to you excepting this: you must take regular exercise, as much as you can bear without fatigue; as little medicine as possible, of the simplest kind,

and this only when absolutely necessary; and a moderate quantity of plain food, of the quality which you find by experience best to agree with you. No man, not even a physician, can prescribe diet for another: "a stomach is a stomach;" and it is impossible for any one to reason with safety from his own to that of any other person. There are a few general rules which any man of common-sense may learn in a week—such as this, that rich food, high seasoning, etc., are injurious. I can say no more to you, sir: you must go and cure yourself.'

"This is the only common-sense I have heard on the subject of dyspepsia in the whole course of my life. From this time my cure commences; and, if I meet with no accident, I shall probably be seen some thirty years hence enjoying a green old age and a sound digestion."

These hopes were fulfilled; he did live to a green old age, attaining nearly eighty-one years, and I remember how often he spoke of Abernethy, in what veneration he held him, and with what zest he would tell of the interview which he thus described.

Still, the torment of a subtle disease gave him much annoyance, and even at one time threatened his hopes of success in the life of a civilian. In the year 1825 he appears to have decided to remain in the army. He writes to a friend as follows:

"My physician has been very frank with me in relation to my health, and has extended his view to my future course of life as connected with it. I was in some measure prepared for what he said by the opinion of Dr. Bell, who, in passing through Philadelphia, had used the same freedom with me. The conviction, however, which my mind has yielded to their opinions is not the less distressing to my feelings, nor has it been conceded but upon a course of independent reflections of my own. In one word, they have both expressed the opinion that I cannot expect to regain my health with sedentary habits, and that I must give up for a time, if not forever, my new professional pursuits. Dr. Bell went so far as to say that to return to my office would be taking a direct and certain road to my grave, and that I could not expect to enjoy my health, if I should once regain it, in a city, with the regular application of law pursuits. It is unnecessary to say that the necessity of abandoning the objects to which I have devoted all my efforts and thoughts for the last six years gave a severe shock to my feelings. I cannot, however, contend against what is inevitable, and I have done what I could to recon-

cile myself to my fate. . . . I of course need not say that, in abandoning my new profession, I again become dependent on my commission, which is that of Captain of Artillery. My regiment is to be stationed in New England in the spring, so that I shall be in some city in my native section of the country and the neighborhood of my friends. . . . For myself I cannot be idle, and I must seek in the army that preferment for which my health has forbidden me to hope in another profession. Perhaps I could not be better provided with facilities for re-establishing my health than by my New England destination; but I have now an unlimited furlough for its recovery."

The cause of the despondency betrayed in this letter was ultimately removed. It was after this that he fell in with his medical "guide, philosopher, and friend," in London; and an improvement in health encouraged him to take the long-meditated step and retire from the army.

There was another desire in his heart, to which it is next in order to refer. I read with tenderness the idyl of my father's youth; it became the life-poem of his fifty-three years of manhood and old age, for the vision never faded away. It began when he was on the staff of General Brown. His relations with that distinguished officer were not merely those of an aide-de-camp, but also of an intimate and confidential friend; in the general's house he was as one of the family. It so happened that, in the year 1822, a daughter of the general's was in New York, at a celebrated school of the period kept by Mademoiselle Désabeye, afterward known as Madame Chégaraye. The major, having been sent one day by his chief with a message to his daughter, saw while there, in the school parlor, a young lady who was receiving the visit of a friend. My father always gallantly insisted that it was one of those cases in which the first sight decides the future, and that he made a resolve at that moment which, some years later, he was so happy as to be able to fulfil. The name of this young gentlewoman was Catharine Morgan; she was the adopted daughter of John J. Morgan, then a Member of Congress from the State of New York, and at that time absent at Washington. I must pause in this narration and say a few

words about a man to whom my father was so greatly indebted.

John Jordan Morgan was born in the city of New York in the year 1768. He was a Welshman by descent; the family were loyalists before the Revolution, and destined him for the Royal Navy; but under the new order of things their prospects changed, and they adhered to the cause of the Republic. He was twice married. His first wife, Catharine Warne by name, a woman of great beauty and loveliness of character, was a niece of Colonel Marinus Willett. She died three years after their marriage. A child, aged four months, had preceded her. The shock of these successive afflictions was so great that Mr. Morgan's health, not strong before, gave way, and he was sent abroad for a change of climate and scene. In Lisbon the pulmonary disorder, which had threatened to end in early death, was arrested; and, after some time spent in travel, he turned his face homeward, restored to health. He sailed from Penzance in a packet-ship bound for New York. Among his travelling companions were the family of Mr. Robert Baldwin, formerly Mayor of Cork, who was going out to seek a home in the New World. Some two or three years afterward he married one of the daughters, Eliza Baldwin. The Baldwin family settled in Canada, where, by their talents and abilities, and by fortunate intermarriages, they became wealthy, prosperous, and influential.* Some time after his second marriage Mr.

* The party who sailed from Penzance for a home in the Western world consisted of Robert Baldwin, his sons William Warren Baldwin and John Spread Baldwin, and his daughters Eliza (afterward Mrs. Morgan), Alice, Anna Maria, who died unmarried, and Mary Warren, afterward Mrs. Breakenridge. Augustus Warren Baldwin, another son, was not with his father at that time, being in the Royal Navy; the eldest daughter, Barbara, came out afterward. The Baldwin family became distinguished in Canada, and were notable for integrity, industry, and intelligence. Dr. William W. Baldwin was both a lawyer and a physician, and of high standing in each profession. His son Robert was

Morgan adopted the little daughter of his first wife's brother, whose mother also was dead. The child had been christened Catharine Morgan, and on her adoption that became her full name.

Some are yet living who remember Mr. Morgan as he was in the maturity of his powers. The image thus retained is that of one who merited the somewhat worn but just description of "a gentleman of the old school;" no other phrase expresses what he was. Highly educated and accomplished, a good Latin scholar, writing and speaking the French language fluently, and having the manners of a day that has passed, he adorned the society in which he moved. He served the State as a Member of Assembly, and the country in Congress, and was at one time Collector of the Port of New York. While still a young man he made an investment in lands in Madison, Herkimer, and Chenango counties, in this State, and for more than fifty years he never failed to spend the summer at a farm in Brookfield, some twenty-four miles south of Utica, where he indulged the tastes of an ardent disciple of Izaak Walton and a lover of country life. The lands were purchased by him, under patent, from the State. He was fond of saying that he was the first white man who ever owned them. When he went there, with his family, to take possession they had to find their way through the woods by the blaze-marks on the trees, and were supplied with fish and

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among the most prominent men of his time in Canada, being a member of Lord Elgin's Cabinet, and more than once Premier. Augustus W. Baldwin was Admiral of the Blue at the time of his death, and a perfect specimen of the old British officer. John Baldwin made a fortune in business, and left a large family. Three of his sons took holy orders: the Rev. Edmund Baldwin was connected with St. James's Cathedral, Toronto; Maurice Baldwin is now Dean of Montreal; and Arthur Baldwin is Rector of a vigorous parish in Toronto. It may be said of the original family and its descendants that they were of an upright, honorable, clever stock, not slothful in business, and distinguished for their earnest religious character and firm faith.

game by Indians, who still roamed the forest. Mr. Morgan was one of those men who, in principle intensely democratic, are personally as intense aristocrats. He deemed republicanism the best form of government, but for his house and social relations he had another code. There is a line which men are compelled to draw who, whatever their political opinions, would maintain their personal dignity and self-respect, and he drew it with rigor and precision. Such was the man who became, in time, the young officer's father-in-law, and remained through life his devoted friend.

It may have been a year after the accidental interview which I have described when Major Dix met Miss Morgan in Washington. Her father, unwilling to leave her behind him again, took her to the capital at the next session of Congress. Mrs. Morgan, when calling one day on a lady whose cards were out for a ball, was asked to bring her daughter with her. She declined, on the ground that she was too young to go into society, and added, "She will be just fifteen years old the day of your ball." "That," replied her friend, "is the more reason why she should come: make it her birthday *fête*." Consent was given; the young girl went to that ball and, after that, to every one of the season. The circumstances were propitious to the success of a suit, which Major Dix soon afterward began to press; and the result was an engagement, which, after the lapse of two or three years, was happily terminated by their marriage.

Mr. Morgan took a warm interest in the prospects of his future son-in-law. He encouraged his wish to leave the army and pursue the profession of the law, foreseeing that, in time, he would be called to the higher duties and responsibilities of the statesman. The fates, however, appeared unpropitious, and, in consequence of continued ill-health, he became despondent on the subject of the desired change. The prospect of a brilliant career seemed likely to fade out altogether; and this was the more trying, because personal influences had been at work by which the door to civic honors would

have been opened the moment he should have laid the sword aside. A year before his marriage he had made up his mind that he must remain in the army, and that he could offer to the woman of his choice nothing better than the uncertainties and trials which environ the lot of a soldier's wife.

In the year 1826 a convention was concluded at Washington between the United States and the Kingdom of Denmark, and a special messenger was to be sent to Copenhagen, charged with delivering that treaty to our representative in that country. The President instructed Mr. Clay to offer that service to Major Dix, and to require his departure on his mission with as little delay as practicable. The letter is dated May 10, the copy of instructions May 17. On the 29th of that month the marriage of John A. Dix and Catharine Morgan took place, at St. John's Chapel, in the parish of Trinity Church, in the city of New York, the Rev. Benjamin T. Onderdonk, an assistant minister of the parish, officiating. Immediately after the wedding they embarked for England in the packet-ship *William Thompson*, Captain Bowne, and arrived at Liverpool on the 29th of June. A fortnight was pleasantly passed in England, during which they visited Chester and the Vale of Llangollen, Lichfield, Kenilworth, Warwick, and Stratford-on-Avon, Oxford, and London. Thence, on the 15th of July, they set sail for Hamburg, on the way to Copenhagen. I have before me a journal of their tour, full of entertaining sketches of persons and places, from which I shall make a few extracts, by way of a specimen of their adventures.

From Hamburg they posted to Kiel, crossing what was then the Danish province of Holstein, and were not a little embarrassed by the fact that no one could speak any language which they understood, in consequence of which they were "under the necessity of exercising a system of pantomime whenever they had any want to satisfy." On that painful progress, says the writer in the journal, "we were more than once compelled to gnaw our fingers for half an hour before

we could make them comprehend that we wanted something to eat, and as to any details they were altogether hopeless. Whenever a gleam of intelligence shot across their features in the course of the dumb-show we were carrying on, the exclamation always was, '*Butter und brod, yaw!*' and bread and butter was all that we could get. By the middle of the second day we were almost reduced to desperation for the want of meat, and we looked around in vain for something which would convey the idea of animal food. Not a fowl, a pig, or a sheep was to be seen in the yard; we even glanced about for a kitten or a puppy, but our researches were in vain, and we were finally compelled to dine on '*butter und brod*,' as we had breakfasted that morning and supped the night before."

From Kiel they crossed to Copenhagen. Official duties having been performed, some time was spent in visiting places of interest in the vicinity of the city. There is a graphic account of their attempt to effect an entrance into the palace of Fredericsborg:

"On the 27th, immediately after breakfast, we disposed ourselves for an inspection of the interior of the palace, and after passing through the gates we looked around for some one to direct us. The first animate object was a boy, of a sort of Flibbertigibbet air and manner, drawing rain-water from a barrel, which he was watching with the strictest vigilance in order to put the tap in at the very nick of time—when the liquid should reach the brim of the receiving vessel. We asked him in English where we could find the keeper of the palace, and were probably just as well understood as we should have been if we had addressed him in Hebrew or Chaldaic. He answered in Danish, which was about as intelligible to us as any of the languages spoken at Babel at the time of the confusion; but in both these operations he kept his eyes riveted steadfastly upon the water-cask. In this hopeless condition of our department of intelligence we concluded to wait patiently until the boy's eyes were somewhat

relieved of the urgency of their present occupation. We did not wait long, and after divers attempts to light up his features by the force of signs with a ray of comprehension, we set off for a building across the court to which he motioned us. At this building we were motioned to another, on the opposite side, where we were again motioned to another. But at this last we found immediately that we were upon the right scent; for, on repeating to a female at the door the motions we had made to the boy, she pointed to the stairs, up which we ascended without hesitancy. After knocking a long time another female showed herself, in slippers down at the heel, a flannel night-dress wrapped round her, and her hair put up in papers in the best modern taste. She looked so French in every respect that we could not refrain from addressing her in that language; and, to our unspeakable joy, she replied to us, with one of those half-hackneyed and half-natural smiles which none but a Frenchwoman can manage with effect. Under her direction, attended by the keeper, who lodged in an adjacent apartment, we at last commenced an examination of the palace."

From Denmark they went over into Sweden, and spent some days at a watering-place called Ramlösa. Travelling in that country at that time was attended with difficulties now, happily, unknown. They had their own carriage, but were dependent for horses on a crude post-service, the farmers throughout the country being required by law to provide those animals for the use of travellers, together with a wagon and driver for persons who needed them. If the tourist had his own carriage, but no coachman, the farmer drove; but where there were both carriage and coachman, the farmer who furnished the horses mounted the box with the coachman, surrendering the reins, and only assisting in whipping the horses. This aid, it would appear, was invaluable.

"Sometimes we had horses which were able-bodied enough, but so invincibly lazy that they required a constant application of the lash, like machines that stop the instant the impel-

ling force is withdrawn; and on these occasions we found an incalculable advantage in having a coachman who could whip one horse while the farmer was whipping the other. Our equipage was not like that of Hudibras, who, by putting one side of his steed in motion, was sure the other would follow: we had, unluckily, two distinct wills to influence, and they had not even the advantage of inanimate bodies in a momentum, by which the movement is kept up for a while after the propelling power ceases; but the instant the lash was removed from the back of either animal he became as motionless as a statue. This perversity in our cattle was a source of no little embarrassment to us for a while; but by the ingenious device of two whips in constant operation—a contrivance for which we were indebted to the joint deliberations of the Swedish farmer and our Swedish coachman—we managed to keep the backs of both perpetually exercised, and by this means the regular rate of progression was maintained."

Here is a pretty description of a scene on the shore of the Sound:

"From the height you look down upon the Sound, but two miles distant, and always whitened with the canvas of passing ships. Beyond it lies in full view the opposite coast of Denmark, but four miles from the Swedish shore, covered with farm-houses and windmills, and more strongly marked in the spires and castellated turrets of Elsinore, where every trading vessel to and from the Baltic is compelled to stop and pay tribute. Lower down lies the island of Wen, where Tycho Brahe resided, and held his nightly consultations with the heavens; and in the opposite direction you catch a glimpse of the little Swedish town of Helsingborg, overlooked by a huge quadrangular tower, which is fast mouldering into ruin, upon a neighboring height."

Returning to Copenhagen, they proceeded by steamer to Lubeck, and so back to Hamburg. A brief tour through Holland ended the Continental expedition, and, embarking soon after from an English port, they returned to the United States.

That autumn Major Dix was ordered to Fortress Monroe. The following winter was spent at that station. His young wife's experience of domestic life in a garrison was equally novel and disagreeable. To some of their trials she thus alludes in a letter home:

"Old Point Comfort, December 21, 1826.

"My dear Father and Mother,—To-morrow will be a week since we arrived here, and during that time we have not heard from you, and there is no hope of getting a letter to-day, for the Norfolk steamboat has brought us nothing. We are expecting our furniture very anxiously, and the moment it comes we shall take possession of our two rooms, without waiting for a carpet. We should build a kitchen, if we considered ourselves established here for any length of time. We have two very handsome rooms, with marble mantel-pieces and folding-doors; but not a store-room, nor a closet, nor a pantry is to be found on our premises. We are going to have pine cupboards made, and our dinner-table can be supplied with meat from the mess-room. I have seen nothing here that deserves the name of a vegetable. It is the poorest place, I believe, on the whole face of the earth. The worst part of Sweden is a garden compared with it. I give you my word there is not an eatable thing to be procured here but oysters and fish. They send to Norfolk, and Washington even, for the commonest articles of food, and have to pay high for them; and then such servants—all black; and so careless and improvident! The other day I had been asking repeatedly for wood, and was getting almost out of patience, when our maid came and said to me that if I could wait a few moments longer Rippon would saw some. This is always the case in Virginia, they tell me. Foresight"—[here the letter is continued in my father's handwriting]—"I suppose Catharine meant to say, is a thing altogether unknown in the domestic economy of Virginia. And as she has been called off to attend to some engagement, I have taken upon myself to finish her letter.

"Since the first moment of my arrival here I have been incessantly occupied—on drill, on parade, on guard, on court-martial, on inspection, on review; and busied with a thousand other modes of duty, which scarcely give me time to think. . . . I am no more strongly enamored than I was before I came here of my profession, although the duties are not very disagreeable; but everything like a systematic application of the mind to any purpose of improvement is out of the question. One is no sooner in the midst of a reverie on some interesting or important matter, than a fellow comes in to break off the chain of thought with—

'Captain, the sergeant won't let me have my rations of whiskey;' or, 'Captain, Private Such-a-one has got drunk and lost his musket.'

"Catharine endures her separation from you with much firmness, though she feels the whole extent of the loss. We both hope for better times, when we shall all be united. I will write again in a day or two, and in the mean time am ever most affectionately yours,

"J. A. Dix.

"The New Hampshire delegation have unanimously recommended me to the President for the appointment I had in view. I received a day or two ago a copy of the paper addressed to him."*

A letter from General Brown to Mr. Morgan in the following year shows the esteem in which my father was held in the military service of the United States:

"Head-quarters, Washington, January 15, 1827.

"My dear Sir,—Yours of the 12th this moment came to hand; and I have to say, and with much pleasure, that I have heard often from Captain Dix and your daughter, and always to my satisfaction. Your son is gaining an army character of great value. Mrs. Vinton had a letter from Captain Dix a day or two since; all well.

"Mrs. Brown and Mary will thank me for remembering them, with friendly regard, to you and Mrs. Morgan.

"I am yours truly, Jac. Brown.

"John J. Morgan, Esq."

In consequence of continued ill-health, and on a strong recommendation from the post surgeon, Major Dix was relieved from duty at Fortress Monroe early in the summer of 1827

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* The paper referred to in the postscript is as follows:

"*To the President of the United States:*

"If it be contemplated to appoint a Chargé d'Affaires to reside at Stockholm or Naples, the undersigned beg leave to express their confidence in the integrity and talents of Mr. John A. Dix, of New Hampshire, and their wish for his appointment, should the public interest justify the same. "Signed, Thomas Whipple, Jr.,
Jonathan Harvey,
Joseph Healley,
Ichabod Bartlett,
Nehemiah Eastman,
Titus Brown."

and sent to New York. Time passed on, and his dissatisfaction with the duties of his profession, dull and spiritless in time of peace, increased; until the wish to leave the army revived with added strength. In this desire he was seconded by his wife, while her father, Mr. Morgan, not only encouraged him in his projects but offered assistance, without which it would, perhaps, have been impossible to take the contemplated step. Besides the estate in Madison, Herkimer, and Chenango Counties, Mr. Morgan also owned lands in Otsego County, in the neighborhood of the beautiful village of Cooperstown. For the care of these he needed an agent. The position was offered to his son-in-law, on condition that he should leave the military service, fix his residence in that region, and commence the practice of the law. Nothing could have accorded better with his inclinations, especially as he disliked towns, and had a strong relish for a country life. The following documents give the conclusion to this period of the history:

"West Point, July 29, 1828.

"Sir,—I have the honor to resign my commission as Captain of the Third Regiment of Artillery. After sixteen years' service in the army, in which I have lost my health, I trust it will not be deemed too much if I ask that my resignation may be accepted on the 1st of July or August, 1829, and that I be in the mean time permitted to remain on furlough. I could not in less time make my arrangements for engaging in another profession. I should have gone to Providence on the recruiting service for a few months, but I thought it would but occasion inconvenience to the Government, if I were to go there and resign almost as soon as the establishment was formed. This consideration only has induced me to send in my resignation at this time instead of a later day; particularly as the place which I have purchased is now under a lease, so that I cannot get possession of it for several months. I mention all these circumstances, although I indulge the hope that the consideration of my long service and enfeebled health will alone insure the indulgence I ask—the last it will be in my power to ask of my military superiors.

"I am, Sir, very respectfully,

"Your most obedient servant,

"John A. Dix.

"Major-general Macomb."

"Adjutant-general's Office, Washington, August 6, 1828.

"*Order No.* 41.

"The resignation of Captain J. A. Dix, of the Third Regiment of Artillery, has been accepted by the President of the United States, to take effect the 31st of December next.

"By Order. R. JONES, Adjutant-general."

"Adjutant-general's Office, Washington, August 7, 1828.

"*Special Order No.* 86.

"Captain Dix, of the Third Artillery, has authority to be absent on furlough until the 31st of December next, when his resignation will take effect, as announced in 'Order' No. 41.

"By order of Major-general Macomb.

"R. JONES, Adjutant-general."

And thus my father's connection with the army was severed—not to be resumed till the year 1861, and in the most trying days of the history of the Republic.

III.

COOPERSTOWN.

RURAL LIFE.—THE LAW.—PRELUDE TO POLITICAL CAREER.

A.D. 1828-1830.

Cooperstown.—"Apple Hill."—Long Winters.—House-keeping.—Offer of a Foreign Appointment.—Samuel F. B. Morse.—First Effort at Speaking without Notes.—Village Excitements; Religious Revivals.—Quiet Years Formative of the Future.—Political History of New York.—Review of the History of Parties in the United States.—Federalists.—Administration of John Adams.—Democratic Triumph under Jefferson.—The Hartford Convention.—De Witt Clinton.—The Bucktails.—Convention of 1821; State Constitution Revised.—Colonel Haines.—Major M. M. Noah.—General Brown's Relations to President Adams and Governor Clinton.—Anti-Masonic Excitement.—Disappearance of William Morgan.—General Jackson's Administration.—Views of John Adams Dix on Anti-Masonry.—Slavery; African Colonization.—Speeches on Negro Emancipation.—Opposition to Abolitionism.—In 1830 appointed Adjutant-general of the State of New York.—Farewell to Otsego.

III.

The place at Cooperstown referred to in the letter of resignation was purchased by Mr. Morgan for his son and daughter in the year 1828. They took possession of their new home late in the autumn, and spent the following winter there. The village of Cooperstown, first settled by Judge William Cooper, A.D. 1790, and famous as the birthplace of James Fenimore Cooper, our immortal novelist, is situated at the southern end of Otsego Lake, a lovely sheet of water, ten miles in length, in which the Susquehanna River takes its rise. My father's residence was known as "Apple Hill." It was on an eminence which commands a full view of the lake; and just below the bank the Susquehanna pursued a winding course beneath the willow-trees. The house was a large, old-fashioned structure, without pretension to architectural effect, but homely and spacious; an avenue of great trees led to it from the village street; my father's modest law-office was also within the enclosure. He took delight in the scenery, and particularly in the view of the lake from the veranda. Once, when a guest had arrived late in the evening, he prepared an agreeable surprise. Leading him forth in the morning, without a word of introduction, he suddenly showed him the prospect, and stood awaiting the exclamations of delight which ought to have followed. But the imperturbable traveller, casting an indifferent glance about, merely observed, "*Why, I see you have got quite a pond here.*" I have heard my father tell the story and descant on his intense humiliation and disgust. Such persons as these are painful social trials. It is related of a member of the fraternity, who was encountered in Lombardy, on his way South, and asked whether he

had come across the Alps, that he replied, "*Well, I guess we did come over risin' ground.*"

The winters were terrible for their length, and for the weary hiding of the earth under the snow; not so hard, however, as those in his native New England, where sometimes the ground would crack open with a loud report under the effect of the frost. There was one long, long winter, when, from November until April, they never once saw the ground; and my mother knelt down and kissed the first bright blade of grass in the spring.*

I have old letters, good store, which passed between Apple Hill and No. 14 Bond Street, the country and the town homes. They tell of the changes of the seasons, the hard winters, the hopeful spring-tides, and the mellow autumn days. In the summer all were together. My father threw himself with his characteristic ardor into the pursuits of rural life, declining no responsibility of a householder. Writing to his wife, in New York, on the 30th of April, 1829, he says:

"It will be three weeks since we parted, and I verily believe it is the longest period of bachelorhood I have known these three years. At all events it has been a most dreadfully solitary and gloomy one. We are very busy; but, unluckily, our minds are not as attentive as our hands to the matters in operation. Mine is constantly stealing over the Vision,† thence to the Hudson; and down its waters, you know, the transition is an easy one to the city and Bond Street. To-

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* Referring to those New England winters, my father told me how, when a little fellow, he came back to his mother, who had seen him off to school, and solemnly told her that there was a crack in the ground too wide for him to cross. He was an imaginative child—one of those whose fancy evolves wonders from its laboratory. He would gravely tell of things which could not have taken place—of having beheld creatures flying which cannot fly, and of encounters with unknown and terrific beasts. It was the play of the imagination; for otherwise the lad was the soul of truth and honor, as the man was to the very end.

† The name of a mountain in the vicinity.

morrow is the 1st of May, and do ask your father and mother if they will consider me unconscionable in thinking of coming for you in about ten days. You know we shall be reunited here soon, and I am such a poor devil without you that they must be magnanimous and give you up.

"We are exceedingly engaged. I have taken down and put up thirty-two windows. The house is thoroughly cleaned. Yesterday and to-day I have been laboring at making fence; and the lot is assuming an entirely different appearance. I am very tired; it is a long time since I have labored in the fields. I recollect riding horse to plough when I was a small boy; but I got thrown in cutting some caper with the horse, and was turned over to the school-master as a bad subject. To-morrow I hope to commence the garden arrangements. The chickens have come; and although there are only six hens they gave us five eggs before they had been three hours with us. The rooster, in violation of all good-manners, deserted the ladies in a few hours after his arrival, and went prowling about the neighboring barn-yards; but in an hour afterward he returned with as thorough a trouncing as a rooster could wish to have. He is all blood now, and I venture to predict that he will not quit his own premises again for a twelvemonth."

That these efforts to please the *maitresse de maison* were successful may be inferred from a letter written on her return from New York:

"Cooperstown, May 20, 1829.

"My dear Father and Mother,—We arrived here safely yesterday, all well, but very much fatigued. The roads were very bad, and, notwithstanding careful driving and excellent springs, my bones ache yet most dreadfully. Margaret says she is enchanted with our situation and all the comforts of our establishment. You have no idea how beautiful we look; and then we have music incessantly—during the day the birds and frogs sing in chorus, and in the evening and at night the whippoorwill regales us with his melancholy note. There have been a great many improvements made during my absence, and even now it is a perfect little paradise. I wish, my dear father and mother, you could take a peep at it, and if you did not immediately exclaim, 'How dreadful it would be if they were obliged to go to France!' I should think you had more

taste for diplomacy than for the charms of nature. . . . The mail closes in a few moments, and Mr. Dix wishes to say something. God bless you, my dear father and mother; and in the hope that it may not be very long before we meet again, I am your affectionate child,

"C. M. Dix.

"Mr. Dix has just shot a poor whippoorwill, and he will send it to Mr. Baldwin, in order that he may satisfy himself upon the old disputed question."

The letter runs on, but in my father's handwriting:

"My dear Mother,—We were all so tired yesterday that we could not make the effort to write. . . . While Catharine was finishing the above I heard the note of a whippoorwill, and although it went more against my conscience than anything I ever committed, I shot him while his note was unfinished in his throat, in order to satisfy the long-disputed question of his identity with the night-hawk. 'Tis a horrid murder, and it is the only (I may say, too, it will be the last) bird shot on Apple Hill while this domain has been under my management.

"Catharine thinks it is far better, even for health, to be here than to be sitting eight or ten hours a day in a hot city, even though it were Paris, copying the Minister's despatches. However, if the appointment had come, and not an inquiry, I should have accepted it."

The explanation of the closing paragraph is given in a letter addressed to Mr. Morgan by Mr. Van Buren, who was at that time Secretary of State under General Jackson. I copy it as it lies before me:

"*Private.*

"My dear Sir,—No Chargés will be sent out before the meeting of Congress, and then the list of applicants is immense. Would Major Dix like to go to France as Secretary of Legation, with a most agreeable man as Minister, and start by the first of $\frac{\text{July}}{\text{August}}$? I do not know that I can obtain his appointment, as there are many applicants, etc., etc. Let me know at the earliest moment. Remember me kindly to Mrs. M., and believe me to be, in great haste, Yours very sincerely,

"M. Van Buren.

"Mr. Morgan." "Washington, May 11, 1829.

This offer, on being communicated to my father, was at once declined. His reasons, though not stated to Mr. Van

Buren, were, that it came in the form of a friendly inquiry merely; that there was no certainty of his being appointed, in case his assent had been given; and that it would have made his position a very embarrassing one, if the President, on being advised with, should not have deemed it proper to make the appointment. If the inquiry had been put in the shape of a direct offer it would have been accepted, as the importance of the mission gave the station an extraordinary value.

The society of Cooperstown, though small, was agreeable. Mr. James Fenimore Cooper and his family were in Europe, but others of the name remained, who, with the Bowers, Phinneys, Pomeroys, and Metcalfes, formed a delightful circle. At the north end of the lake was "Hyde," the country-seat of Mr. Hyde Clark, who had married the widow of Mr. Richard Cooper. My father's house was generally full of guests; among them was one whose fame has since that day become world-wide, Samuel F. B. Morse. A painter of no small reputation, and, I think, President of the National Academy of Design, yet scantly furnished with ducats, as is the wont with devotees of the graphic arts, he came to Cooperstown with a mind to paint a portrait or two, and was invited to Apple Hill. My mother seems to have appreciated the solemnity of the situation. She writes:

"I get along admirably with my visitors, or rather visitor, Mr. Morse, of whom I felt a little afraid, considering that I had seen him only twice before, besides his having been to Europe, and being a member of the *ton*, as well as literary and philosophical societies. He is a very agreeable man, and the admiration of all the young ladies here, notwithstanding he is a widower with three children, and here and there a gray hair. He takes admirable portraits: the price is twenty-five dollars."

A cousin of my mother's, Margaret Willett (the same whom she mentions in her letter of May 20), daughter of the old Colonel Marinus Willett, and then a young and beautiful girl, was with them at Apple Hill. To her charms the portrait-

painter was so far sensible that he put her and my mother into a landscape which he painted for Mr. Dewitt Bloodgood, of Albany. Many years afterward this picture came into my father's possession, and thenceforth formed one of the chief treasures of his little gallery. The scene is taken from Apple Hill; the lake and its enclosing hills are in the distance; stately pine-trees stand at the side, and in the foreground are two young ladies grouped near the stump of some old monarch of the "forest primeval," over which relic they have carelessly thrown their shawls.

In Cooperstown my father made his first attempt at public speaking. The Rev. Mr. Tiffany, pastor of the Episcopal Church, invited him to address the Sunday-school. The occasion must have been deemed important, for he made elaborate preparation; and having written out what he intended to say, and, as he supposed, committed it perfectly to memory, set forth, rashly leaving the manuscript at home. "I remember," writes one who was present, "just how he looked, as he stood a short distance from the front pews. He went on very smoothly for some time; but then, forgetting what came next, and becoming confused, and not being especially familiar with the subject, he had to make his way out of it as best he could. I was so confused myself that I never could remember how he did it. When we reached home the first thing he asked was how I felt when he broke down. He often spoke of it in after-years, with great amusement over his ill-success on that first appearance as a public speaker."

Some of our most fluent orators can, no doubt, recall similar incidents in their own experience. Such failures may, perhaps, be almost necessary to insure a final success. It was so with my father, who in after-life spoke with perfect self-possession, used no notes, and appeared completely independent of external helps in his oratory.

Half-way up the lake stood a large building, known as the Fish House, to which the people resorted in excursions and picnics. A boat, having as its motive-power a pair of super-

annuated horses, plied to and fro, carrying many a merry party, duly supplied with the implements of the angler's craft. Feasts and dances followed on their landing. In the autumn, when the salmon-trout came out of the lake, it was a pretty sight to see the river below us filled with boats, each having a blazing pine-knot in the bow, by the light of which men speared the fish as they rose toward the flame.

I have before me an amusing letter, written by my mother to a young girl who had been near them at boarding-school; it gives a pleasant insight into their village life:

"My dear C.,—I received your last letter the other evening, just as I was preparing to pour out tea for a party of old married ladies: sociable visits are all the rage nowadays, and I have been going the rounds of the village in this mode of entertainment. There has not been a party since you left here, so you have nothing to regret on that score. You have heard, no doubt, of the 'awakening' in our Presbyterian Church, and would be amazed to see the alterations occasioned by it in some of your friends. A smile has not visited the countenances of Rachel —— or Mary —— for many a long day, and they both look as pale and emaciated as if they were 'without hope,' instead of having experienced it. Maria ——, Helen ——, and the two ——'s, are also among the '*changed*.' Mr. Tiffany has profited by the example of his neighbor church, and made very great exertions toward the advancement of his own. He has service in the church every Wednesday evening, besides three classes for religious instruction, which he attends to weekly; the married ladies, the young ladies, and about eighteen gentlemen, young and old; so that I think even you would not have been in very great danger of total ruin this winter. There is a prayer-meeting every evening at Mr. ——'s, and often before sunrise young and old are seen wending their way toward the house of prayer. Mr. and Mrs. —— and Miss ——, all members of the meeting, have left it, and become, I hope, good Episcopalians. Mrs. —— and Mrs. —— do not visit, and scarcely speak when they meet; mutual intolerance seems to be the cause of the trouble between them. Of your beaus I know nothing, excepting that they are alive and well; Mr. —— is still in Mr. ——'s office; and every Sunday I hear the notes of Mr. ——'s flute mingling with the choir. Old Mr. —— peeps abroad now and then, and has found his way to Apple Hill just once since you left us. The children are well, and unite with me in love to you, your mother, and sisters."

Quiet and commonplace as was my father's life during the three years spent in the pretty village by the lake, it has a peculiar interest as the preparation for a career among the most brilliant recorded in the history of our country — the prelude to honor, influence, and their attendant cares; thence was he to go forth, led by God's providence, to fill in turn almost every position of trust which it was in the power of his fellow-citizens to bestow. He who was destined to become Adjutant-general of the State, Secretary of State and Superintendent of Public Instruction, member of the State Legislature, Senator of the United States, Assistant Treasurer and Postmaster of the city of New York, Minister Plenipotentiary to a foreign court, member of the Cabinet at the most critical epoch in our national history, Major-general in the United States service, and Governor of the State of New York, completed his preparation for the half century of responsibility and toil in the tranquillity and comparative obscurity of a rural life. To that life he was always devoted; more and more fondly did his heart turn to it as circumstances forced him farther away. But a sense of his fitness for public life was growing in certain quarters where able men were needed; and it was not possible that such a one as he, trained in the school of the army, well read in the law, already a finished scholar, master of three or four languages besides his own, highly connected, accomplished in many arts, and cultivated by foreign travel, could be hidden away. There were those, in short, who knew what he was, and wanted the help which he was fitted to give.

It cannot, I think, be doubted that he must have displayed at that time the qualities for which he was noted in after-life—the sagacity and good judgment, the activity and energy, the tireless industry and the versatile genius, which guarantee success. His reputation, indeed, was already made; nothing was wanting but the opportune moment to call him to higher duties and a wider sphere. That moment soon arrived; and, with it, another change in the varied history. Beginning life

as a soldier, he had, after fourteen years, resigned his commission and commenced the practice of the law. Scarcely four years elapsed before he put off the robe of the jurist and entered on the higher duties of the politician and the statesman. They stood high in those days; it may not be so now. Then it was an advance to go from the Bar to public life; when office sought men, not men the office; when to be a scholar and a gentleman, to be conspicuous for good-breeding, literary attainments, and high social position was neither a disadvantage nor likely to impair the prospect of success; ere yet the pathway to distinction had become a gauntlet-race between lines of vulgar and selfish inferiors, whom he must flatter and propitiate who would secure their support.

And here, perhaps, as well as anywhere, I may add this—in which they who knew him best will bear me out—that all his life through he was what he was at the outset—the same honest, sterling character, ever true to his convictions, and consistent when tried by standards that do not change; and especially that he was a man who detested the lower arts of the politician. Using that word in the sense which it now bears, it would be incorrect to speak of my father as a politician; he should rather be called a man of state. He was not of those who manœuvre to gain a public position. One after another offices came to him; not through his bidding for them; often against his will; simply because men needed the help which they knew him able to give. I wish to emphasize the fact that in my father there was no resemblance to the politician of our day; and the proof is, that he was never popular in political rings, but rather detested by the men who compose them. It is easy to account for a dislike which they did not affect to conceal. They could not depend on him to farther their selfish aims, nor count on him for personal favors in return for partisan support; he was above their plane, and they lost no opportunity to do him a mischief when they could. It would not be true to say of him that he disliked office, position, and power. A man naturally

likes to do what he knows he can do well, and he thoroughly understood the science of governing. But this he did unselfishly, without personal ambition, on high principle, without dread of criticism, for the welfare of the Commonwealth, in the fear of Almighty God. Therefore his part was that of the statesman, and therefore was he disliked and mistrusted by the common politicians, who gave him their support only when they could not help it, or when they hoped to profit indirectly by an influence which they could not bend to do them a favor.

I hope to justify this estimate of my father's character as I proceed. The time has come to begin the story of his political life. This I shall attempt to relate with such aid as I could obtain from books, letters, and conference with men familiar with the transactions of former days. But, since this memoir was not intended for the eye of persons deeply versed in American politics, while yet some knowledge of them is indispensable as we proceed, I venture to begin by offering the reader what I have gathered with my own hand in that rich yet tangled field, while seeking to comprehend the position and the course of one who ranks among the most conspicuous figures in the scene.

The author of the work entitled "The History of Political Parties in the State of New York, from the Ratification of the Federal Constitution to December, 1840," makes the following somewhat discouraging observations:

"It has often been remarked by citizens and politicians of our sister States that the action of political parties in the State of New York was to them unaccountable and mysterious."

And he adds: "Hundreds of strangers have said to me that the politics of New York were to them a perfect enigma."*

If persons familiar with the political history of our country and public affairs are thus perplexed, how much more difficult

* Vol. i., p. 168.

must it be for one not versed in those subjects to find his way through the maze? My object is, not to discourse at length on national or State politics, but only to trace the course held by one man across that field; to tell why he chose the path which he pursued, and what he accomplished as he trod it. For this end, however, it seems necessary to take a general view of the subject, for the benefit of readers who, like myself, desire to know prominent facts, and are content to disregard questions of minor importance.

Such a moderate knowledge of American history as every cultivated and intelligent citizen ought to possess is sufficient to enable the reader to follow me, while I remind him of the early conflicts of the States, just freed from the leading-strings of the transatlantic government. When, in the year 1783, the Independence of the Colonies was acknowledged by Great Britain, the future became a subject of anxious consideration. It was evident that the "Articles of Confederation," adopted in 1777, were not sufficient to hold the States together, or to provide against external dangers; a movement for a more perfect union was inevitable. But at once several and diverse tendencies appeared: one toward a strong, consolidated, quasi-monarchical system, with a President and Senate elected for life; another, toward the establishment of a series of independent democratic governments, confederated for the common defence, but separate and autonomous. In addition to these two there was a third idea—a compromise between the extremes, known as "the Virginia Plan"—which in its main features was ultimately adopted.

In the State of New York there was strong opposition to the formation of the National Union. The "State Sovereignty" idea was ably represented there, and party lines were first drawn on that question. Alexander Hamilton, a genius of the highest order, stood at the head of the Federalists; George Clinton, the popular Governor of the State, led the opposition. The United States Constitution was adopted in 1788, under the protest of the New York delegates, Hamilton

alone excepted: of the nine States whose assent constituted its ratification New York was not one. When the fact became known in New York the question was raised, whether to enter the Union or to stand apart, independent and untrammelled. The Antifederalists gave way reluctantly, and under protest, and thus, with hesitation and difficulty, New York came into the Union. It was a triumph for the Federalists; but it left them face to face with a discontented and able opposition.

Upon the refusal of General Washington to serve a third term as President, John Adams, a Federalist, was elected his successor. At that time John Jay was Governor of New York. The National and State Governments were both Federalist, and in full accord. But, as often happens, the beaten party was really the stronger of the two, and it took but a little while to demonstrate the fact. The spirit of democracy, or republicanism (for the opposition party claimed for itself both those names), was in the air; and a course had begun which no human power could have prevented from running to its logical end.

Looking back to those days, one sees that the Federalists were doomed. They contributed, no doubt, also, by more than one blunder, to their fall; or it may be that, like the House of Bourbon, they could not see and would not learn, and were too honorable to change their convictions. The constitution of the State Government was anything but democratic. There was a body known as the "Council of Revision," which, acting with the governor, had an absolute veto on the acts of the Legislature. There was a system by which the governor, with a "Council of Appointment," had the entire political patronage of the State, and disposed of every office. The right of suffrage was much restricted. When the Legislature assembled the custom was that the governor should appear and make them a speech, to which they returned a formal reply. Many other customs, which had obtained under the ante-Revolutionary domination, were kept up. Imagine how

the spirit of republicanism fretted and chafed! The Federalists, in power, used their opportunity to maintain their position. To do this they were forced to employ an unpopular machinery, and made it, thereby, still more unpopular; while their adversaries, partly from a firm belief in democracy, and partly from the sheer necessity of gaining power, denounced the existing system, and demanded reform. The well-known sympathy of the Federalists with England, and their detestation of the French Revolution, added to the prejudices which were daily growing against them.

The year which followed the election of the elder Adams was one of furious political excitement. The friends of his administration were denounced as in treasonable correspondence with Great Britain, and intending, by a series of gradual changes, to uproot republicanism and establish a limited monarchy. Doubtless these charges were unfounded; but it is as certain that the Federal party did not believe in the people, nor think it possible that a pure, representative, popular government could succeed. We do not doubt the purity of the motives of the Federalists of 1798; but as little can we doubt the sincerity of the Republicans in supposing that a gradual subversion of the government was in progress by those in power. Such an impression gave to the opposition a tremendous *élan*.

Accordingly, in the year 1800 the Democratic or Republican party triumphed. Thomas Jefferson was elected President of the United States; George Clinton, Hamilton's lifelong adversary, was still Governor of New York; and all over the Union the Antifederalists were victorious.

If anything were needed to complete the ruin of the Federalists it was the attitude assumed by many of them during the war of 1812–'15. That conflict was the expression of an intense hostility to Great Britain, and a sense of insults, injuries, and wrongs which stung the American people to the quick, and led them, though comparatively weak, to strike back blow for blow. But the Federalists, who, notwithstand-

ing their discomfiture, still continued to act as a party, opposed the war. Nay, so disastrous were some of the features of the conflict, that Federalism revived, notably in New England and New Jersey, and distinguished itself by at least one remarkable performance. While the State of New York, under Governor Daniel D. Tompkins, stood by the general government, and voted men and supplies for the war, unterrified even by the capture and burning of Washington in August, 1814, there were signs in the New England States of a design to secede from the Union, set up a separate government, and make peace with Great Britain. Such tendencies appear to have sought expression in the notorious "Hartford Convention," which met in December, 1814, and of which the history forms an important episode in our national annals. But the Peace of Ghent, in 1815, brought these schemes to an end, strengthened the government, and prostrated the Federalists, who never, as a party, returned to power. They continued, by their old name, as an element in politics; but the arm was fallen from the shoulder-blade and broken at the bone.

My father and grandfather were both in the army during those trying years, and devoted heart and soul to the American cause. It was then that my father formed the opinion of the Federalists which he always held, and of which he has left a record, from which I shall make, at this point, some extracts. It is not strange that he should have felt disgust for those who opposed the war; such was the natural sentiment of the ill-clad, half-starved, suffering soldiers toward those at home who could not conceal their sympathy with the enemies of the United States Government. His views of the Hartford Convention, and of the principles and history of the Federalists, come in here in their proper place. They are contained in an article published in the *Albany Daily Argus*, and headed, "*Mr. Justice Story and the Hartford Convention.—The Federal Party, and the Importance of our National Union.*" Of the Hartford Convention he says:

"We believe there is nothing better settled in the public mind than the conviction that the Hartford Convention, in its various relations of time and purpose, was inimical in the highest degree to our national tranquillity and honor. . . . We consider it as the most prominent case of infidelity to the interests of the country that has yet arisen under our free institutions; we conceive it to have been infinitely more mischievous in its tendencies than the two petty insurrections which occurred in the early stages of the government, because it was sanctioned by some of the first names in New England; and we should regard any diminution of the opprobrium which has fallen upon it as the result of indifference to our social and political blessings."

He then proceeds to treat of the opponents of the war of 1812, and of the history and aims of the Federalists, as follows:

"There are many individuals now living, and bearing about them in scars and physical infirmities honorable testimony of their dangers and exposure in the country's service, who will not readily forget the sneers and execrations with which they were followed in leading through Massachusetts their little bands of combatants to the theatre of hostilities. They cannot readily forget the attempts which were made to silence the drum, to dissuade the citizens from enlisting, and from providing those indispensable supplies of money and subsistence which were required for the support of the public forces. There are many others who witnessed the constant opposition of the Massachusetts delegation on the floor of Congress to all bills for levying new forces, and even for supplying with food and munitions those which were already levied and contending in the field of battle against the enemies of the Republic. These are things not to be forgotten, and we believe we are not uncharitable in saying that they are not easily to be forgiven. Yet we are told that the Federal party failed, not through treachery—'for truer spirits the world could not boast'—but through despondence. Despondence may produce inactivity and an abandonment of spirit; but we apprehend that it is a more vehement impulse that excites to open opposition, and so obscures the sentiment of patriotism as to lead its subjects to seek success at the expense of their country's reputation. In Great Britain political opposition has always restricted itself to such a course of measures as would consist with the duty which every citizen or subject owes to the community or state of which he is a member: it has never perverted or obliterated the sentiment of country, or so depraved the heart and the reason as to make the disgrace more acceptable than the glory

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of the public arms. We take a position of the truth of which we are well assured when we say that the Federal party, in Massachusetts and Connecticut especially, rejoiced in the failure of our military enterprises and in the triumph of the British forces over ours.

"The writer of this article will never forget that he himself was at a private dinner-table in Boston, in 1812, when the news of General Hull's surrender was received, and that a gentleman bearing one of the most respectable names in that city gave as a toast—'A similar fate to all our generals!' He was then a youth; but he still retains a strong sense of the disgust which this impiety excited upon his own unformed sentiments, although it was received with applause by twelve or fifteen persons of strong minds and refined education.

"We are disposed to overlook altogether the opposition of the Federal party to the government during the long series of embarrassments which preceded the war. The country was at peace, or at least was involved in no declared hostilities with foreign powers; and the measures of the Federal party, however indispensable in particular cases, were fairly adopted for the purpose of destroying the influence of their opponents. A strong distinction is to be taken between measures agreeing in all particulars, excepting the single one of belonging to a state of peace or a state of war. A declaration of hostilities is the common signal at which all parties are bound to unite in rallying around the standard of the country. Upon this the Federal party throughout the country divided in 1812; and it is this division that will constitute the criterion of their admission to the public confidence. Those who abandoned the party at that epoch, and supported the government in its trials, cannot be distinguished from the most meritorious classes of citizens. Those who continued to oppose the principle of the war, but still contributed their best exertions to bring it to an honorable termination by sharing its perils, contributing to its resources, or by voting supplies of men and money in Congress, are entitled to the same honorable distinction. But we avow our total want of charity for those who contributed all in their power to embarrass the government, to obstruct the successful prosecution of hostilities, and who were willing to purchase the downfall of the prevailing party at the price of the public dishonor. That there were many such, we know; that they composed a majority of the New England Federalists, we fear, if we do not believe. We deny to these all claim to public confidence, because we consider their aberrations as the result, not of infirmity of judgment, but of depravity of principle, which time has no power to change. The oblivion which the author of the article under review implores is their only refuge; but it is not to be won by palliating their offences and asserting their purity: the outraged

sensibility of the public must be conciliated by their silence, by a studious concealment of their guilt; by trusting to its mercy, and not by appealing to its justice.

"We are told, also, that the debt of gratitude to the Federal party can never be extinguished. To our ears, we confess, these are unaccustomed sounds, and we do not feel that the reason or the heart responds to the sentiment. We know that many illustrious individuals of that party contributed to the formation of the Constitution, and the organization of the government under it, and that some of their early measures were well chosen for the prosperity of the country. But we know, also, that as many distinguished members of the Republican party bore their share in those early operations of government; that the career of the Federal party was marked at its first stages by a perversion of the fundamental doctrines of our Republican system, and that it went on with headlong precipitation to an extremity which wrought its own downfall by arousing the popular indignation. We cannot but feel also that such is the irresistible tendency of the principles upon which that party proceeded, and that, in the vicious examples which they have interwoven with our public history, they have done an injury to the cause of liberal institutions, which could have found no adequate redress but in the accompanying retribution which fell upon them in the fulness of their prosperity and strength.

"We appeal to the writer of the article under review to say whether Washington or Hamilton, or any other illustrious name, which he claims as belonging to the Federal party at the organization of the government, would have been found in its ranks in 1812? We have in strictness nothing to do with the party in its infancy. Most parties are virtuous and disinterested in the season at which they take their rise. But they are to be judged by their results—by the evils or benefits which are the natural consequences of their principles. It was impossible that the principles of the Federal party should produce much else than evil, for they were in direct hostility to the fundamental principles of the system to which they are applied. As the reviewer admits, the Federal party 'wanted a just confidence in our free institutions, and in the moral ability of the people to uphold them;' whereas our whole political system proceeds upon the assumption that the people are competent to self-government. It was a necessary consequence of this fundamental error that measures should be adopted, even in the most virtuous days of the party, in counteraction of the first principles of the Republic; that it should be considered necessary to infuse a more energetic action into the machine of government, and to diminish the control of the people over it, by usurping the exercise of powers which they had reserved to

themselves. No obligation, which any member or members of the Federal party have conferred on the country, can counteract the evils of these precedents; and how stands the account, when we follow out their principles to the consequences in which they terminated—to a long and vindictive struggle against the supremacy of the people, to a factious opposition when the necessities of the country demanded their aid and sympathy, and to a treacherous indifference to the public interests when all was finally put at hazard by an appeal to arms? This is a fearful balance, which we are sure no friendly hand will attempt to strike!

"We repeat, the only refuge for the Federal party is in oblivion; and he who seeks to palliate its errors inflicts upon it the greatest of injuries; he excites recollections which might not have been disturbed, and calls forth expositions alike ungrateful to the feelings of their authors, and reproachful to the character of those whose conduct and actions furnish the occasion for them."

The Federalists received their death-blow, as a political organization, in the year 1815. The instability of temporal affairs, however, generally forbids a long enjoyment of prosperity. Scarcely were Republicans victorious, when they began to disintegrate. Murmurs were heard, from time to time, against the "Virginia Dynasty," and lines were drawn between North and South. There were symptoms of trouble long before that day. The Presidents of the United States had, for twenty-four years out of twenty-eight, been taken from Virginia: George Washington for his two terms, Thomas Jefferson for as many more; Madison for eight more years. Adams, of Massachusetts, had served but one term. The Madison administration now nominated another Virginian, James Monroe, for the succession. The movement displeased many at the North; and dissensions and divisions followed which ultimately had the effect of breaking up the Republicans. Mr. Monroe's election did not heal the breach, but merely postponed the inevitable catastrophe: Governor Tompkins went into office with him as Vice-President.

At this time there rose to power one of the most remarkable men that New York ever produced. De Witt Clinton, nephew of the first Governor of this State, was for many

years the centre about which the political sphere revolved: it may be said that the people of New York were gathered into two hostile camps, as Clintonians and Anti-Clintonians. In 1818 a permanent separation took place between the supporters and opposers of his administration, though both sides belonged to one and the same political school. The opposition to Governor Clinton was headed by Martin Van Buren, the most skilful politician of his day; he was the life and soul of an organization which ultimately became dominant in the State. In the city of New York, and out of Tammany Hall, sprung up a clique of able and restless men known as the "Bucktails." Hostile to Clinton, they constituted, as has been said, "an organized opposition to the State administration, and political opponents to the Democratic party in the State represented by the governor as its chief."

In the year 1821 a great revolution occurred in the State of New York, though without the effusion of blood or the help of bayonets. At a convention held at Albany the constitution of the State was revised, or rather made over, so that old things passed away, and changes which would have been considered impossible a quarter of a century before were effected. It was a complete triumph for the Antifederalist, Anti-Clintonian Democracy; from that date the Clintonian party, as such, ceased to exist. To enumerate the changes is unnecessary; they were in the line of Republican progress, and among those things which logically follow on the application of certain principles. The last vestiges of the ancient *régime* passed away, and the government became popular in spirit as well as in name.

On the 1st day of January, 1823, Governor Joseph C. Yates was inaugurated at Albany. It may be said that the State of New York was at that time in profound political peace.

But the clearest weather is often a breeder of the heaviest storm, and in the following year that unity was shivered all to pieces. In the United States the Presidential question de-

ranges everything else; the battle for the chief magistracy, which, unhappily for us, occurs once in every four years, is the measure of the progress of events and the state of parties. To the question who should succeed Mr. Monroe discordant replies were given; and no less than five Richmonds took the field, in the persons of Calhoun, Clay, Jackson, Adams, and Crawford. Of these Mr. Calhoun, the Secretary of War, was the favorite of the younger army men. My father, then stationed at Washington, and aide to the general of the army, was, as I have previously observed, one of his ardent supporters. Mr. Van Buren, on the other hand, a Senator of the United States, and still actively interested in New York politics, took the side of William H. Crawford. The Crawford movement was so distasteful to many in the State of New York, that a party of considerable strength, known as the People's Party, was formed, rather to oppose him than to support any particular candidate. The opposition was successful, and resulted in the election of John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts.

In that celebrated campaign my father took an active part. Among the means employed to defeat Mr. Crawford was the establishment of a newspaper in this city, called the *New York Patriot*. Its editor, Colonel Charles G. Haines, was a native of New Hampshire, a man of ability, and an intelligent, zealous politician. The more immediate object of the attacks of the *Patriot* was Major Mordecai M. Noah, the editor of a rival journal. My father, a warm friend and constant correspondent of Colonel Haines, wrote for the *Patriot*, advocating the cause of Mr. Calhoun, and taking special and particular delight in vivisecting Major Noah.

The inauguration of Mr. Adams in 1825 was followed in a few months by the return of De Witt Clinton to power in the State of New York. The manner of this re-appearance was intensely dramatic; it constituted the sensation of the day. The Crawford party, then in the ascendant in the Legislature, intending to place their adversaries in a dilemma, rashly

attacked Mr. Clinton, and turned him out of a minor office which he had held for many years. The result was to make him the most popular man in the State. Aroused at an uncalled-for and wanton affront like this, men started up on all sides, called meetings, lighted bonfires, launched anathemas at the political blunderers at Albany, and vowed that Mr. Clinton's wrongs should be avenged. It is certain that Mr. Van Buren, always shrewd and sagacious, had nothing to do with this business, the result of which was ruinous to the man whom he supported. A coalition took place between the People's Party and the friends of Mr. Clinton; and in the autumn of 1825 he was again elected Governor of the State of New York. One of his earliest acts was to call Colonel Haines to Albany and make him his Adjutant-general.

In connection with this period in the history of our State politics I present the reader with the following letter, which shows the head of the army in the light of Mentor to his impetuous young friend, and contains a just tribute to Mr. Clinton. It is dated at head-quarters, June 22, 1825, midway between the inauguration of the President and the election in New York. After some remarks of little interest here the general continues:

"You must be aware that, as General-in-chief, it is very desirable that I should be on terms of friendship with the President; and as he has made me understand how desirous he was and is for my good-will, we can but march on together in good-fellowship. I say to you that Mr. Adams has my regard, and I wish him so fortunate as to be re-elected without opposition. I must not be suspected of any other sentiment.

"My feelings in relation to Mr. Clinton are of a different character. He is a man very much after my own heart. Such men as Clinton are always ready to put all to hazard in a great cause. They do not stop to calculate when they should act. De Witt Clinton has carried his country forward a quarter of a century at least, by the undoubting movement he made in commencing the New York canals. I mention this to show my estimate of his mind. Had he been Governor of New York in 1812 he would have taken possession of Canada very far down the St. Lawrence as a duty and as a business of course about which not much

speaking or writing would have been called forth. It would have turned upon the efficiency of a single mind acting upon a great body like New York, and the utter insignificance of Canada to Quebec at the opening of the war. Mr. Clinton is no ordinary man, and though his fame is as lasting as the waters of the great lakes, he will be politically prostrated again, if he and his distinguished friends are found in the ranks against Mr. Adams. Mr. Clinton and his friends must not be found in opposition to the administration of Adams, if they intend to hold the government of New York. If you cannot bring yourself to entertain kind feelings toward Mr. Adams, you can, I hope, desire the political prosperity of Mr. Clinton. If so, give him your most zealous, your most devoted support as Governor of New York, and never allow him to be represented as in opposition to the National Government. Re-elect him by some twenty thousand majority, and then, yes, then keep quiet, at least modest, on the Presidential question. I am out of all patience with the ridiculous, the empty friends of Governor Clinton, who name him for the office so well filled by Mr. Adams before they are sure of even the State of New York.

"You are presumed to know me; you do know me; and on all proper occasions I ask you to say that I am devoted to the administration of Adams, and that I think the State of New York would be disgraced if she should again forget what is due to Clinton.

"Mr. Adams is willing to believe you are his friend. Your burlesque of Governor Troup's Message* is too good to be lost. It gave the President a few moments of the most hearty enjoyment. Be not alarmed: he can enjoy a good thing in silence as well as any man.

"What think you of our friend Calhoun's speeches to the South? I pray God that he may prosper, but believe me when I say that he cannot be President of this happy country before he is turned of sixty. He will be convinced of this truth before he is much older, and then he may place his influence where it may serve the cause of a great man. Write me often and fully. Yours, JAC. BROWN."†

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* George M. Troup, Governor of Georgia, and a pronounced "States Rights" man.

† By way of sequel to this letter I have placed in the Appendix a document which, probably, now first sees the light. It was found among my father's private papers, endorsed by him, and carefully put away. It is interesting, not only as a contribution to the political history of the era, but also as showing how intimate were the relations between General Brown and my father, and how ample were his opportunities of

I have reached the year in which my father's active political life began. It was during the canvass of 1828. Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun were candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency. General Jackson was supported by those who opposed the re-election of Mr. Adams. In Otsego County a Republican committee was formed, of which my father was chairman. In maintaining the cause of General Jackson he was also obliged to resist one of the most remarkable political movements that ever agitated the people of the State of New York.

In the summer of 1826, while Major Dix was in Europe on his mission to the Danish Court, a great sensation was caused in the neighborhood of Buffalo by the disappearance of one William Morgan. This man, a member of the Order of Free and Accepted Masons, suddenly vanished from the sight of his friends; nor, to this hour, is it certainly known what was his fate. But he had betrayed the secret of the Order, and there is little doubt that he was murdered by members of that society. Investigation disclosed the fact of the nocturnal journey of a coach, drawn by relays of swift horses, and the conveyance of a mysterious victim to the borders of Lake Erie; and there were rumors of the launching of a boat on the gloomy waters at midnight, and its return with one man less than it bore away. The whole western part of the State became excited over the crime; that excitement became intense as time passed on, and it was found impossible either to detect the perpetrators of the outrage or ascertain the fate of

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studying the movements of that day. Whatever helps us to discover the motives and comprehend the thoughts of men in high position is of general benefit; and no one can fail to observe, in reading the following paper, how keen was the sense of honor of the public men of that day, to whom it was matter of grave concern that the shadow of a suspicion of their motives should fall upon the record of their lives. The subject referred to, as will be seen, is the attitude of Mr. Calhoun before the country in connection with the Presidential canvass of the year 1824. (*See* Appendix, No. I.)

their victim. Failing in the attempt to bring the criminals to justice, the people in that part of the State, conceiving a horror of Freemasonry, determined to obtain, through the ballot, some reparation for the murder of Morgan. They accordingly resolved that no man belonging to the Order of Masons ought to hold any public office; and they made this the issue wherever called upon to vote.

The movement had, at the outset, no reference to the political question of the hour. It showed itself first in the local elections of the autumn of 1826, as a personal matter exclusively—no Mason of any party was to be voted for or allowed to hold office. It was the result of a feeling, partly of terror, and partly of indignation against a secret society, which appeared to be able to spirit men out of this world with impunity, and defended the acts of its members to any extent to which they might go. As time passed on the excitement increased; the Antimasons, as they were called, enraged at the failure of each successive attempt to detect the authors of the crime, and stimulated by fresh disclosures of the incidents of that fatal summer's night, kept growing in number, until they began to carry county after county, and assumed proportions which astonished the leaders of the old parties, and made them doubtful what course to pursue. Political Antimasonry had as yet no existence; but it became daily more evident that the movement must ultimately take that direction.

Thus matters stood when the administration of Mr. Adams drew toward its end, and the question of the succession came up. The people of this State, other than those engaged in the Antimasonic movement, divided, part desiring the reelection of the President, and part favoring a change. It began to be believed that Governor Clinton and Mr. Van Buren, who at that time was still in the United States Senate, would unite in supporting General Jackson for the Presidency. But General Jackson was not only a Mason, but very high in the Order. Governor Clinton also belonged to it. The friends of

Mr. Adams saw that to carry the State for him against Jackson it would be of infinite value to secure the Antimasonic vote. But the difficulty lay here: that the Antimasons, bent solely on their one idea, declined to unite with either party, and refused to merge their organization in any other. Such was the state of affairs when Governor Clinton passed from the scene. He died suddenly, on the 11th day of February, 1828, at a moment when his popularity and influence were greater, perhaps, than at any former period of his life.

In the autumn of that year occurred the elections for President of the United States and Governor of the State of New York. The party who styled themselves National Republicans supported Mr. Adams for President, and Francis Granger for Governor. Had the Antimasons joined them the alliance would have been irresistible: instead of doing so, they put up a candidate of their own, Solomon Southwick. The selection could hardly have been more unfortunate. The result was that Mr. Van Buren was elected Governor by the Jackson party, although the Antimasons carried fifteen counties, and polled nearly seventy thousand votes. Their movement had assumed gigantic proportions.

General Jackson was inaugurated March 4, 1829. He immediately invited Governor Van Buren to a place in his cabinet, as Secretary of State. The invitation was accepted; and on the 12th of March Lieutenant-governor Enos B. Throop became Acting Governor of this State. The condition of New York politics was critical. Of the thirty-six electoral votes General Jackson had received twenty, the remaining sixteen being cast for Mr. Adams. The Antimasonic voters, having no Presidential candidate of their own, united with the supporters of Mr. Adams against General Jackson, and thus the electoral vote was nearly equally divided. As the National Republicans were declining, while the Antimasons remained enthusiastic and hopeful, it seemed possible that the latter might become the great opposition party of the future. In effect, in the year 1830, as we shall see, they polled 128,000

votes, and came near electing their candidate for governor. They were already preparing to extend their organization into other States, to hold a National Convention, and to take steps to secure, if possible, the Presidency.

It was with this singular body, in the earlier stage of its history, that my father had to contend, as a supporter of General Jackson and Mr. Van Buren. During the years 1828, 1829, and 1830 he was actively engaged in the Jackson movement, as chairman of the Republican Committee of Otsego County. His name is signed to more than one address to the electors of that county, in which the character of political Antimasonry is critically analyzed. According to him, it was no longer inspired by an honest and virtuous feeling growing out of the violence committed on the person of Captain Morgan, and aiming at the punishment of the perpetrators, but had become a political instrument for the elevation of ambitious men to power. He held that its principles involved an indiscriminate condemnation of the innocent and the guilty; that it had proved itself proscriptive, uncharitable, and barbarous; that in certain parts of the State it had separated parents and children, friends and neighbors, dissolved the very ties of blood, and in more than one case invaded the altars of religion, showing itself to be the same spirit which in other countries had shaken the fabric of society to its foundations, and filled them with scenes of disorder and calamity.* For these and other reasons, he strenuously opposed a party which, already identified with the fanatics of an earlier date, and now rapidly taking the shape of a purely political organization, disputed the field with the old Democratic Republicans, and aimed at securing the control, not of the State of New York only, but ultimately of the National Government. In an article published in the *Freeman's Journal*, May, 1829, he thus discusses the subject:

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* Addresses, dated Cooperstown, October 20, 1829, and October 25, 1830, and issued by the Republican Central Corresponding Committee.

"There are but two views in which it is capable of presenting itself—first, as a moral, and, second, as a political question; and these we shall briefly examine.

"First, as a moral question. There can be no difference of opinion as to the outrage offered to the civil institutions of the country and the principles of humanity in the violence committed on the person of Morgan. It is an act which carries its own condemnation with it into the heart of every one; and it deserves that all the energy of the laws should be exerted to visit upon those concerned in it a retribution suited to its enormity. But it is difficult to perceive in what manner it differs essentially from ordinary offences of the same denomination. In degree it certainly bears no comparison with the repeated murders of Patty Cannon and her coadjutors, which have recently been brought to light in Delaware; and if the motives which instigate to enormities of this sort deserve a comparison, it would be an extremely difficult task to determine the relative degrees which revenge and avarice bear to each other in the scale of guilt. If it be said that the abduction of Morgan was the result of a combination, and a deliberate plan matured and executed by a mutual counsel and a concerted action, the reply is that the same characteristics belong to the other cases which have been cited; that they are violent aggravations of the guilt; that no effort should be spared to pursue the culprits into their most secret retreats, and to lay bare the conspiracy to its minutest and most distant ramifications. If it be asserted that it was only by means of the Masonic institution that the murder of Morgan could be perpetrated and concealed, we deny the position. Far wider and more desolating conspiracies have been formed and executed with no other bond of secrecy than that which is contained in a common interest and a common passion. Who, for instance, believes that the conspiracy which was near overturning the Roman Republic would have been better confirmed and concealed by the mysterious sanctions of Masonry, than by the barbarous pledges which each one gave to his fellows in the *humani corporis sanguinem vino permixtum in pateris?* But even were it conceded that the bond of Masonry has in this instance been instrumental to the perpetration and concealment of a deed of blood, what institution is exempt from the same imputation? The most extensive and barbarous conspiracies in the history of society are those which have been formed, and in some instances accomplished, under the sanction of religious ties. It is only necessary to cite the Gunpowder Treason in England, and the Eve of St. Bartholomew in France, to feel the force of this observation. If it be said that the spirit of Masonry leads, by force of any inherent tendency, to the production of violence and social disorder, the history of society may safely be appealed

to for a refutation of the assertion. The institution has enjoyed, in a quiet and inoffensive way, its idle mysticisms. We look upon it with no very friendly prepossessions; on the contrary, we have always deemed it a mere collection of formalities, unworthy the very time expended on them. But on this point we acknowledge our profound ignorance; and, in doing so, we might, but for a reluctance to give pledges with regard to our future course in life, even go farther, and unite with a fallen politician in saying that we 'never shall be a Mason.' But the time, we trust, is long past when the guilt of a few members of any society is to draw along with it the condemnation and punishment of all the others. It is one of the characteristics of an enlightened age to separate the innocent and the guilty, to distinguish between individuals and the societies or institutions of which they chance to be members. It is the province of ignorance and barbarism to punish the individual by annihilating the mass, to retribute particular guilt by general condemnation. The abduction of Morgan is unquestionably, as to all the guilty, a remove from the refinements and charities of the age toward the rudeness and barbarism of ages which are past. To visit that act with indiscriminate punishment would be a similar remove on the part of the whole community. That such will be our course we are not yet prepared to believe: that such a doctrine can long be even covertly propagated we do not believe. The whole matter of Morgan, as a moral question, resolves itself into a case of great simplicity. An outrage has been committed against the laws, which have appointed the penalty and prescribed the method of investigation. If they are inadequate, in this case, to detect the authors, it is the result of that imperfection in which all human institutions participate; and it is to be remembered that far more atrocious deeds of violence and cruelty have eluded forever the researches of man, and are reserved for that final retribution which no device of art, no bond of secrecy, can escape.

"Second, as a political question. As long as the efforts of Antimasonry were honestly directed to the detection and exposure of a crime and the punishment of its perpetrators, it was purely a moral question. But in the course of its progress it has assumed a totally different complexion, not only by means of new elements combined with it, but by means of the new objects which it proposes for attainment; and it has now become entirely a political question. It is almost unnecessary to trace the influences by which this excitement has been gradually converted, from a virtuous and disinterested, into a base and personal impulse. The history of all free governments, in which great results are to be produced by acting upon public opinion, is prolific in instances of the same nature. There is always a body of disappointed individuals, the

outcasts and remnants of party; men who are ever sagacious in discovering that a declining cause has 'no ground of principle,' and that a rising one is the cause of religion and philanthropy; whose hopes of success depend upon disturbing the established order and institutions of society; and who are always prompt to advocate excitement of any species, withdrawing its efforts from its legitimate aims, and going on in friendly companionship in its course to power. Among the Antimasons there are many virtuous individuals, who will in future times, when the present indignation shall have had its crisis, be surprised at the transition which has taken place in their measures, while their motives have remained the same—who will be unable to comprehend how they have been deluded into the support of men whom, in dispassionate moments, they would deem utterly unworthy of their co-operation and confidence. It should have been a reflection with every honest man, when the efforts of Antimasons were first pointed to the acquisition of political power, whether he would be willing to share political power with such coadjutors. Nothing but undue passion could have overlooked the inquiry or obscured the reply. Happily the inquiry has now become a common one, and the process of separation is going on so rapidly that we may soon expect to see the Antimasonic phalanx reduced to a meagre array of bigotry and prejudice, supported, or rather enfeebled, by those derelicts of party who, for the last ten years, have been volunteers at every gathering, and fugitives at every defeat.

"The whole matter of Antimasonry, as a political question, resolves itself into a very simple proposition, which this community is called on to decide. Shall the reins of government be continued in the hands of the party which now holds them—the party which has always been faithful to the great cause of Republican principles—the party with which all our most grateful recollections and our best hopes are associated; or shall this party be abased, and insanity and passion be elevated to the seats of power? We would not wrong this community so much as to entertain the slightest doubt of the manner in which this question will be put at rest. Even if the issue of the late elections in the very strongholds of this new political sect, where its merits are best appreciated, had not brought us unerring assurance of its approaching downfall, respect for the people of this State would forbid us to entertain a suspicion which would be equally inconsistent with their good-sense and justice, and with the intellectual light of the age in which we live."

The Antimasonic movement ultimately died out; but in expiring it gave birth to a new party, which in after-years

attained to the political control of the State of New York. Assuming the title of "Whig," and thus cunningly casting on the old organization the reflection of Toryism, this new organization disputed the field with such success that, in the year 1839, its candidate, William H. Seward, was elected Governor. Thus parties rise and decline, succeeding one another in a measured procession, and each perishing, apparently, of diseases engendered in its full prosperity.

I proceed to a subject which began to engage my father's serious thoughts during his residence in Otsego County. The question of slavery was, undoubtedly, one of the gravest that ever engaged the attention of American statesmen. On this his views never changed; they were the same in 1829 as in 1859. What they were may be seen from two addresses delivered by him, one in Cooperstown, in 1829, the other in Albany, two years later, in the interests of the Colonization Society.

A plan for colonizing the free blacks of the United States in some foreign country was first proposed in the Legislature of the State of Virginia; in the year 1816 a joint resolution was adopted, with only ten dissenting voices in both branches of that body, authorizing the Executive of the State to solicit the aid of the general government in attaining the contemplated objects. Similar resolutions were soon afterward passed by the Legislatures of the States of Maryland, Georgia, and Tennessee, all looking to the colonization of the free blacks of the United States in some distant region, where they might participate, in fact as well as in form, in the benefits of a free and independent government, and enjoy the consideration and privileges from which they were debarred here by the structure of society and individual prejudice. The first practical attempt to give effect to these declarations was made in the year 1816, when a society was organized in the city of Washington, with Judge Washington, of the Supreme Court of the United States, at its head, under the name of the Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United

States. Under the anspices of this society several establishments were formed at Cape Monserrado and its vicinity, on the Gold Coast of Africa; an extensive tract of country, under the name of Liberia, was ceded to the society, for the purposes of colonization, by the surrounding tribes of natives; and the results were so successful as to lead to attempts to extend the influence of the Society by every suitable means, especially as the enterprise rested on the exertions of individual zeal and benevolence.

Accordingly, a meeting of citizens of the county of Otsego was held at the Court-house in the village of Cooperstown, on the evening of the 12th of November, 1829, to take into consideration the propriety of forming an auxiliary society. Samuel Nelson, Circuit Judge, and one of the Vice-Presidents of the State Society, took the chair; and Levi Beardsley, of Cherry Valley, was appointed secretary. The objects of the meeting having been stated from the chair, the following resolution was offered by Mr. Dix:

"*Resolved*, That this meeting, entertaining a high sense of the benefits to be expected from African colonization, proceed to organize a County Society, as an auxiliary of the State Society of New York, for the purpose of facilitating the transportation to Liberia of such free people of color as may be disposed to be transported to that colony."

The resolution was moved in an able address; and, as this was the first public occasion on which the subject had been agitated in Otsego County, the speaker went more extensively into detail than would otherwise have been necessary, in explaining the design of the American Colonization Society, the advantages which it promised, and the progress which had been made in the execution of its objects.

The same subjects were handled in another speech, made at the Capitol in Albany, April 2, 1831, on the occasion of the first anniversary meeting of the New York State Colonization Society, at which General Dix was present by special invitation.

I refer to these two speeches in order to show my father's estimate of the institution of slavery; how profound was his horror of it, and how keen his sense of the evils resulting from it; while at the same time he felt the grave difficulties of the subject, and respected the position and the constitutional rights of those persons who had the misfortune to be slave-holders. Referring to the free blacks, and the benefits which they would derive from emigration, he says:

"There is not in the history of civilization—nay, not in the history of barbarism itself—an instance of degradation so fixed and hopeless as that to which this unhappy race is consigned among us. It would be inaccurate to say that Nature has set up between us and them an insuperable barrier. But certain it is that the difference of color, which is in the order of nature, has grown, through the infamous institution of slavery—through the act of man and not of God—to be a living memento of bonds and servitude which Nature herself cannot efface. Among the nations of antiquity there was no such obstacle to the elevation of the slave to the grade of the master. There was no difference of color, no constitutional incongruity of the species, by means of which the act of manumission could possibly leave behind it a vestige of degradation. Freedom exhibited itself to him with all the allurements of consideration and equality; it excited the spirit of ambition, and animated the exertions of industry. Accordingly we find in the ranks of servitude men who added lustre to the age in which they lived. But I hazard nothing in saying that if these men had sprung up among this outcast race, no brilliancy of genius could have silenced the suggestions of prejudice and raised them, as they were raised, to the level of their masters. It is in vain, under the influence of such discouragements, that civil rights and equality of political privileges are extended, in a spirit of justice and philanthropy, to blacks among us. It is a mere mockery of freedom, when our prejudices render inoperative all concessions in their favor; when they are still consigned, by the condemnations of opinion, to an inferiority without hope and without limit. It is impossible that such a condition of moral proscription can bring forth any fruit of excellence or virtue. Ambition and the very hope of distinction are poisoned at their source; debasement grows into a habit, and the sense of subjection becomes a part of the mind itself. I know that it has been asserted that the African race is originally inferior in point of mental endowments to the race of whites. Sir, this is not a proper occasion for entering into a discussion of this question; but it is worthy of reflection whether this

deduction, which professes to be drawn from certain peculiarities of organization, or from the degraded condition of the blacks among us—I say it is worthy of our reflection whether this is not a mere arbitrary deduction, whether it is not at war with all legitimate philosophy, and whether there is not an unpardonable degree of moral presumption in attempting the solution of such a problem with such uncertain lights. . . . At all events, it would be both unjust and unphilosophical to deduce their inferiority from the very degradation which we ourselves have created, to expect any bright examples of virtue or genius from those whom we have oppressed for a long series of generations with all the burdens of an ignominious servitude, and whom we have finally endued with nominal freedom, merely to degrade them still farther with a moral proscription as oppressive, and more insulting, than the very bonds with which it has been exchanged.

"I am aware, Mr. Chairman, that this condition of the free blacks among us is altogether without remedy; that here they must forever remain outcasts from the pale of our affections and almost of our sympathies. It is only necessary for each of us to refer to his own breast to feel that this is the fact. For where is the man who would admit them to farther privileges, who would elevate them to his own rank in society or give them access to the bosom of his family? Where is the man who does not feel that they are a burden and an encumbrance to the body politic, pressing with a leaden weight upon its foundations, disfiguring its proportions, and impairing its strength? Sir, it is this very conviction—the conviction that their condition here is without remedy—which should render us the more sensible to the long series of injustice with which they have been visited; which should stimulate us to do all in our power to provide for them a refuge from their present debasement, where they may assume their proper rank in the scale of being, and where at least their degradation may not be perpetuated by rearing up their children and forming their minds amid associations of inferiority and social subjection."

Again, he says:

"It is worthy of reflection whether any sincere friend of emancipation can, without inconsistency, withhold his assistance from the plan of colonization—whether it is not a misconceived and a misdirected mercy, which would strike off the fetters of the slave to consign him to a state of moral proscription differing from physical bondage only in the name. Emancipation, as it exists among us, is, in fact, a mere exchange of physical for moral servitude; and if the latter is not attended with all the

restrictions of the former, neither is it attended with the parental supervision and providence which are often its companions."

There can be no doubt as to the views of one who uttered the following words:

"Considered as a mere measure of political economy, colonization has as strong a claim upon us in its tendency to hasten the extinction of slavery as any measure which can be devised for the promotion of the productive industry of the United States. It is an opinion as ancient as slavery itself, that the labor of bondmen is gradually destructive of the soil to which it is applied."

Then, after fortifying this view by a variety of arguments and illustrations from Pliny, Tacitus, and other writers, ancient and modern, and by the result of our own experience, he continues:

"It is not merely because slavery is an impediment to the development of our national resources that its presence among us is to be deplored. It is an impediment also to the assertion of the rank which we claim to hold among the advocates of the rights of man. It may not put at hazard the success of the great experiment which we are carrying on of the competency of mankind to self-government; for it is not inconsistent with its success that he who is fitted for freedom should hold in bondage his fellow-man. But it involves, unquestionably, a denial of the fundamental doctrine of our political institutions, that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are natural and inalienable rights. It is a degradation of the tenure of freedom from a principle above all human law to the principle of brute force—the principle from which despotism itself derives its title. It may not impair the stability of our free institutions, but it impairs our influence in promoting the diffusion of their principles. For who shall be bound to attend to the assertion of rights by us which we refuse to recognize in others? With what effect can we pronounce the eulogium of free institutions when our utterance is mingled and confounded with the accents of oppression and servitude? We have, unquestionably, a justification in the fact that slavery was imposed upon us against our wishes, during our dependence upon a foreign state; but this circumstance will cease to be a justification the moment we falter in our exertions to redress the injury.

"In speaking these sentiments I say nothing to which the sentiments of every liberal gentleman in the South will not respond. Nor do I

fear, Sir, that their utterance here will be misapprehended. I believe the universal feeling of this assembly will bear me out in saying that the slave-holding States themselves would not be more ready than we to resist any attempt to exterminate the unquestionable evil of slavery by measures not warranted by the Constitution under which we live. That it has been abolished with us is the happiness of an accidental position; that it still exists in other sections of the Union is the misfortune of theirs. When and in what manner it shall be abolished within the limits of individual States must be left to their own voluntary deliberations. The Federal Government has no control over this subject: it concerns rights of property secured by the Federal compact upon which our civil liberties mainly depend; it is a part of the same collection of political rights; and every invasion of it would impair the tenure by which every other is held. For this reason alone, if for no other, we would discountenance and oppose any attempt to control it by unconstitutional interference. . . . The American Society has disclaimed from the first moment of its institution all intention of interfering with rights of property recognized by the Federal compact to which the States are parties. It contemplates no purpose of abolition; it touches no slave until his fetters have been voluntarily stricken off by the hand of his own master: all its purposes are subordinate to the rules of public law and the suggestions of private justice and humanity. But it is to the South—to Virginia—that we are indebted for the origin of this great plan; and we are indebted to that State at least for a co-operation in every plan which has tended to elevate the human character or to promote the interests and honor of the Republic. Her voice was raised against the intrusion of slaves upon her during her Colonial subjection; and, faithful to her principles, she was the first among the Southern States in endeavoring to free herself from the incumbrance when she had risen to Independence."

These extracts present as clearly as possible the views of the speaker on the terrible subject to which they relate. He regarded slavery as in itself an evil, a blot on our institutions, and an injury to us politically, socially, and morally. Still, it was an evil which had been forced upon us, and one which must be left to work itself out. The process, though slow, would be sure; under the pressure of irresistible laws it must gradually disappear. No one might justly interfere with it where it already existed; the rights of the owner of slaves must be respected and maintained. Still, the ulti-

mate abolition of the institution was merely a question of time; he looked for it with assurance as a thing greatly to be desired, and in this he claimed that the sympathies even of intelligent Southerners must be with him. His closing words are strong and forcible:

"We are bound by every motive of patriotism to promote the emigration of a caste, whose presence among us is an impediment to the development of our national resources, to the progress of our social improvement, and to the fulfilment of our destinies as a great people. And we are bound by our devotion to the cause of liberal government to unite in the execution of a plan of which the most distant result may be the extinction of an institution which stands alone and isolated among the other institutions of society—A SOLITARY MONUMENT OF A BARBAROUS AGE."

Such were my father's views on the question which embarrassed our statesmen from the first, and ultimately led to the Civil War. I think they never changed. He was no abolitionist in the technical sense in which the word came to be used, but he cordially disliked slavery, and desired its extinction; yet not by measures which would have invaded the rights of our Southern brethren under the compact of the Federal Constitution.

In the year 1830 the home at Cooperstown was broken up. Toward the close of the summer the office of Adjutant-general of the State of New York became vacant, in consequence of the death of its incumbent, Nicholas F. Beck. In accordance with the wishes of political friends, Mr. Dix allowed his name to be presented to Governor Throop. He did not, however, desire the appointment; he was happy and contented in his quiet country home by the beautiful lake. Writing to an intimate friend, on the 18th of July, he says:

"I allowed my name to be presented to the Governor, with the expectation, at the time, that I could pass at least seven months here. I am told, however, that my residence must be in Albany, and I am, therefore, thinking of withdrawing my name. There is much to be considered on both sides. The

salary is only $800, but the Adjutant-general is one of 'the Regency,' and shares a portion of the odium of all mishaps which occur in the administration of the government—a responsibility which would be particularly agreeable to me. In short, it is a political station, besides being a military post of considerable importance—and a station, too, in immediate connection with the government. My means of forming acquaintances and of attracting public attention would be highly favorable. On the other hand, I must break up my establishment here, abandon my law business, which is increasing, and give up my hopes from popular favor. I know not what to do, and I must decide before I can receive the benefit of your counsels."

On the 20th he writes to the same friend:

"As to the Adjutant-generalcy, I have concluded to let the matter take its course. I shall make no exertion to obtain it. My name is before the Governor, and I do not wish the appointment, unless he wishes me to take it."

When the offer came it was accepted. His promotion had been rapid, yet not more so than might have been expected. It is observed by Hammond that, "from the character and talents of Mr. Dix, and more especially from the knowledge he had acquired of military science in the service of the United States, his selection by Governor Throop as Adjutant-general was very judicious, and the appointment was approved by the public."*

In a letter dated December 19, 1830, my father says:

"I am compelled to write you in great haste, and can only say that we are breaking up house-keeping to go to Albany.

"It is with great regret that I leave this place. I have been happy here, and, what is more, quiet and tranquil. I now go to scenes of turbulence and commotion; and, although I am fond of active life, I have no doubt that I shall look back with regret upon the peaceful valleys of Otsego."

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* Vol. ii., p. 241.

IV.

ALBANY.

ADJUTANT-GENERAL.—SECRETARY OF STATE.—
SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.—
MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE.

A.D. 1830-1842.

Albany.—Military Affairs of the State.—Report on the Militia System.—General Jackson's Second Term.—Society *Mêlée* at Washington; Mrs. Eaton.—Rejection of Mr. Van Buren's Nomination as Minister to England.—Governor Marcy.—1833: Secretary of State.—Nullification.—Speech at the Capitol at Albany.—Thorough Organization of New York Democracy.—"The Albany Regency."—Report on Public Education.—Report on the Geological Survey of the State.—Decisions as Superintendent of Common Schools.—Financial Distress in 1834.—Rise of the Whig Party.—William H. Seward.—Coin and Paper-money.—Wild Speculations.—1836: Election of Martin Van Buren, President.—Banking Business, and the Sub-treasury.—Troubles in Canada; the "Sons of Liberty."—Papineau, McKenzie, Rolph.—1838: Triumph of the Whigs.—Retirement into Private Life.—Albany Society.—Home Life.—School.—St. Peter's Church.—The Rev. Horatio Potter.—The Log-cabin and Hard-cider Campaign, in 1839.—Editorial Labors.—"The Northern Light."—Literary Work.—1841: Elected Member of the Legislature.—Illness of Mrs. Dix.—1842: Departure from Albany.—Voyage to Madeira.

IV.

The removal from Cooperstown to Albany took place in the depth of the winter. For the twelve following years my father resided in that city, enjoying the genial and pleasant society of the place. His life was one of incessant activity and industry. He filled three or four offices of importance in succession, and threw himself with ardor into the work demanded by each.

As Adjutant-general he had the supervision of military affairs in the State of New York. The security of the civil order depends upon its possessing ample means of defence against external enemies, and of protection from lawless and seditious persons at home. For these purposes standing armies are employed by despotic and monarchical governments; while republics have been accustomed to rely on the vigilance and patriotism of the great body of the citizens. To raise and train an adequate and efficient militia is, therefore, an object of great importance in a country like our own. Among the duties of Congress, as prescribed in the Constitution of the United States, is that of providing a national militia, to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions.* It is the duty of the States to promote the design by such additional legislation as is adapted to insure the efficiency of our National Guard.

A report on the subject of the Militia System of the State of New York was made to the Legislature, January 5, 1832, by the Adjutant-general. It may be found in full in vol. ii. of his Speeches and Addresses. It was called forth by a refer-

* Art. II., sec. viii., 12, 13, 15, 16, 18.

ence to him of certain bills which had been introduced in the previous session. The tendency of those bills was to treat the militia system as superfluous and burdensome, and still farther to diminish its efficiency. These attacks upon the system were not confined to the Legislature alone, but were set on foot in the principal cities by mock organizations, which paraded the streets in fantastical garb and absurd paraphernalia, in derision of the militia. The same spirit was prevalent elsewhere. In the Legislature of Massachusetts, in the session of 1830–'31, a committee was instructed, by a vote of fifty-two majority, to bring in a bill to abolish all drills, inspections, and reviews of the militia, and such a bill was reported accordingly. The effect, however, was to alarm the conservative men of the House, and cause them to look into the principles of the institution, and the alternative which its abolition presented. After a fortnight's debate the bill was rejected by a majority of fifty-six, and another was introduced giving greater encouragement to the militia than any passed since the war of 1812. General Dix was in correspondence with the Adjutant-general of Massachusetts, William H. Sumner, on these matters, as regards which the two officers appear to have been of one mind. His views are presented in his report already referred to. He argued that the safety of the Republic required that the whole body of the people should be trained to arms, and that a sufficient organization of our military force should be kept up to maintain, against external and internal dangers, the public rights and those of the private citizen. Instead of approving the bills referred to him, he therefore urged a more thorough organization and equipment of the militia, in view of dangers abroad and at home. "It becomes a great people to be always prepared for war, and able to resist and suppress internal disorder and violence. While, under our institutions, a standing army is inadmissible, there ought to be ample provision for a National Guard, and for the education of officers to take the men into the field whenever it may be necessary. He re-

garded the militia of the United States, provided for by the Constitution, as a strictly military institution, peculiar in its character to the civil order of which it was designed to be the protection and support; the aim being to arm and discipline every citizen, so as to be prepared to sustain, in all emergencies, by the united force of the whole community, a system established for the benefit of the whole. He did not deny that there were defects in the militia system; his training as a soldier made him competent to discover them and to suggest improvements; but his dread of a large standing army is evident, and he considered that the true source of national order and safety is the intelligence and patriotism of the citizens. As to remedies, he thought that they must be sought from Congress, and not from the State Legislatures; the general government had cognizance of the subject, and the duty of the State organizations was to carry out constitutional provisions, not to reverse or nullify them. In this view of the paramount powers of Congress, and the propriety of looking to them for the necessary remedies for existing defects, the Legislatures of Massachusetts and Virginia appear to have concurred.*

Referring to the peculiar local situation of the city of New York, he speaks of the importance and value of that uniformed volunteer force which has now grown to our splendid "First Division:"

"Looking to external dangers," he observes, "the city, from its exposed situation, should be covered by a more numerous and better-trained force than would be required if its position were more central. But the danger from abroad is not the only one. Wherever great wealth is accumulated are sure to be found those vices which seek an unlawful sustenance by preying upon it. Great numbers of persons without visible

* The reader may refer, in this connection, to the report of General Townsend and that of the Military Committee of the New York Legislature, in 1881.

occupations have their habitations within the city; and the detection of crimes has more than once led to the exposure of organized bands of marauders, depredating under the cover of secrecy upon the property of the citizens. The dangers to be apprehended from riots and resistance of the public authorities are much increased by the presence of such an abandoned class of transient persons. That these elements of disorder have not led ere this to far more serious evils is, perhaps, to be ascribed to the restraint of a numerous and well-trained volunteer force, capable of being arrayed at a moment's warning in defence of the lives and property of the citizens. In this view the uniformed corps of the city may be regarded as a part of the municipal police, and in times of emergency by far the most efficient part. The destruction of these corps would expose the vast wealth of the city to depredation, and the public order to scenes of violence and confusion."

Several chapters have been added to the history of the New York mobs since that day; and each attempt on their part to break loose confirms the justness of these views. The First Division of the New York State National Guard has been growing constantly in efficiency. The interest of the Adjutant-general in it was rewarded by the sight of its fine condition when, many years afterward, he became its Commander-in-chief.

I shall make but one more extract from this report. It concludes in the following impressive terms:

"Nothing could be more animating to the enemies of liberal government than to behold the people of the United States, under the influence of inconsiderable evils, voluntarily laying aside their arms, and declining to prepare themselves, by exercise and discipline, for the preservation of social institutions and privileges which their ancestors purchased with years of suffering and a profuse expenditure of treasure and blood. No other event, it is conceived, would furnish evidence so conclusive of the decline of that moral spirit in the people upon which our public liberties are dependent.

"As a final observation, it may be remarked that, by impairing the efficiency of the militia, the strongest argument is furnished in favor of

increasing the regular army. Whenever it shall become apparent that the former is inadequate to the public defence—a period which may be indefinitely postponed by a continuance of martial exercises—the whole responsibility of maintaining the public order must be confided to regular troops, in the pay and under the control of the central government. Under such circumstances the close of a war would no longer be a signal for disbanding the army employed in carrying it on, but it would be kept up as a provision both against internal and external dangers. Without reference to the incompatibility of this order of things with the great principles of our political system, the vast expense of such a military preparation would be a constant drain upon our public wealth, and impair our ability to meet future exigencies, by diverting our resources from the higher and more beneficial purposes of improving our internal condition. In a word, it is only under the protection of the militia system that the country is enabled at the termination of every contest to lay aside the more massive and burdensome parts of its armor, and to become prepared, with energies renewed by that very capacity, for succeeding scenes of danger."

The views presented in this report were amply vindicated during the late Civil War. Without the aid of the militia regiments, which marched to the defence of the national capital at the first note of alarm, the Federal Government might have been overturned or driven from its seat by the insurgents; and it is believed that the arguments are as applicable to the subject now as when presented to the Legislature nearly half a century ago. The report constitutes a defence of the system of a National Guard as an essential ingredient in the political organization of the State. The necessity of such a rampart against the public enemies can never again be doubted. The dangers which menace our peace and prosperity are greater now than ever before; nor are they likely to diminish, so long as base men are able, by the abuse of universal suffrage in our large cities, to secure and retain power, and so long as the philosophical theories of the Socialist deceive the ignorant with their fallacious promise, and the outbreaks of the Communist stimulate the passions of the mob.

Brought into immediate connection with the government, General Dix found himself at once affected by the agitations

of the period and a sharer in the political fortunes of those in public office. The times were full of excitement. In the year 1830 the people of the State of New York were broadly divided into two great parties: the Democratic Republicans, or Jackson Democrats, and the "National Republicans," as they called themselves. General Jackson was in the White House, and the State administration was in the hands of his friends. But a powerful organization had been formed, with a view to elect Henry Clay to the Presidency in 1833; and although General Jackson, when first nominated, had declared his unwillingness to serve a second term, his views had undergone a change. Mr. Van Buren, his Secretary of State, and Mr. Calhoun, then Vice-President, were already spoken of for the succession. General Jackson was determined that, whatever else might happen, Mr. Calhoun should not have his place; and, owing to the strength of the movement for Mr. Clay, and under the influence of Mr. Van Buren's friends, the President yielded, and consented to run for the second term. It does not belong to this biography to treat at length of the many exciting events of General Jackson's administration, such as the rejection of the nomination of Mr. Van Buren as Minister to England; the veto of the bill for the renewal of the charter of the United States Bank; and the fearful feud at the capital, when society was convulsed on the subject of the wives of the Ministers of the Army, the Navy, and the Treasury, and when the Cabinet was broken up, after the President's failure to arrange the visiting lists of Mesdames according to his pleasure. The latter story reads like genteel comedy. Nothing can be more entertaining than to discover the old hero of New Orleans in ignominious retreat before Mrs. Calhoun and Mrs. Ingham, Mrs. Branch and Mrs. Berrien, who, notwithstanding the *ukase* from the White House, resolutely refuse to visit Mrs. Eaton or to invite her to visit them; nor can one fail to be impressed by the agitated protests of their husbands, who assure the President that as to matters of this nature they are powerless to oblige him, and must decline the

attempt to coerce their wives into visiting anybody whom they had made up their minds not to visit. In vain did the old hero storm and rage, becoming, indeed, "so much excited that he was like a roaring lion." Meanwhile, Mr. Van Buren (fortunate in being a widower) prudently kept out of the *mêlée* —the only calm personage in the tableau. This was in the year 1830. The next year Mr. Van Buren resigned; the Cabinet was shivered to pieces, and a new one was formed; and from that time Mr. Calhoun severed his relations with the President and Mr. Van Buren, and took his own course, regardless of old associations.

During the following year the political excitement increased; the whole country was in a ferment about the United States Bank, the tariff, the threatening attitude of South Carolina, and the coming Presidential election. Fresh fuel had been added to the flame by the insult offered to Mr. Van Buren by the Senate of the United States, to which I have already referred. Appointed Minister to the Court of St. James, he went to England in September, 1831, although the nomination had not yet been acted on by the Senate, which, indeed, was not to meet until the following December. Meanwhile, an opposition was developed, under influence hostile to the President, by whom the new minister had been appointed, as well as to Mr. Van Buren himself, who was already regarded as a candidate for the Presidency. More than two months had elapsed since Mr. Van Buren's arrival in London before the Senate met. A long delay ensued after his name had been sent in, until, in January, 1832, by the casting-vote of Mr. Calhoun, the nomination was rejected. Nothing could have been more mortifying than the position in which that distinguished gentleman was thus placed. The action of the Senate was without a precedent in the history of our diplomatic service, and the indignation caused by his treatment was prodigious. His friends in the Legislature, together with many of the leading citizens of Albany, concurred in calling a public meeting to denounce the action of the Senate. Gen-

eral Dix was the first speaker. He discussed, not merely the direct occasion which had called forth that protest, but also the history of the negotiations with Great Britain on the subject of our commercial intercourse with her New England Colonies.

"It is well known," he said, "that this is the first instance in the history of the government in which the nomination of a Minister by the President has been rejected by the Senate after entering on the duties of his office. The President is charged by the Constitution with the management of our relations with foreign states; and it has always been deemed proper that he should, as the responsible person, have the selection of his agents. So novel and extraordinary was this case, that it was confidently expected by many that a removal of the injunction of secrecy would exhibit sufficient evidences of the necessity of making it an exception to the general rule. It has exhibited no such thing; it has disclosed nothing of which the public were not already apprised, nothing which has not already been pronounced upon by the judgment of the people. It is true, we are informed by private letters, that imputations derogatory to the moral character of Mr. Van Buren were introduced into the Senate—imputations contradicted by the whole tenor of his life, imputations sustained by no proof, disreputable in their grossness to the individuals who gave countenance to them, and insulting, beyond measure insulting, to the body to which they were addressed. If they shall ever see the light, they will be indignantly resented by all parties, whatever may be their political predilections, as an outrage to justice and truth."

The only reason of a public nature relied on as a justification for the rejection of Mr. Van Buren appears to have been the tenor of his instructions to Mr. McLane upon the negotiation of the latter with Great Britain in relation to the West India trade. After an argument in defence of Mr. Van Buren on this point, General Dix concluded by showing that political hostility to the President was the moving spring of the attack on the Minister to the Court of St. James. He ends with these words:

"I will no longer occupy the attention of this meeting. I feel that I have already too long occupied it, although much remains to be said. I am persuaded that I do not overrate the justice of the American people when I say that there is no refuge for the authors of this blot upon the

national character, and that time will record their indelible disgrace. They will stand before the world, not merely in the light of men who have brought dishonor upon the character of the country, but in the still more odious light of political adversaries, who, in ministering to the purposes of injustice and persecution, have accomplished a double object of personal revenge."

There can be no doubt that the attack on Mr. Van Buren, by directing general attention to him, as a sufferer under a malicious persecution, proved to be one of the causes of his nomination by the Baltimore Convention, in the following May, for the office of Vice-President.

In the autumn of 1832 the Presidential election took place, as well as that for Governor of this State. General Jackson was the candidate of the Democratic Republicans; Henry Clay was nominated by the National Republicans; while the political Antimasons supported Mr. William Wirt. On the question of Governor the National Republicans and Antimasons united on Francis Granger; the candidate of the Administration party was William L. Marcy. The result was that Mr. Marcy received a majority of about 13,000, while the President was kept in office for a second term. Mr. Van Buren, the successful rival of Mr. Calhoun, was elected Vice-President, and thus advanced one step nearer to the highest prize in American politics.

The election of Governor Marcy caused a vacancy in the Senate of the United States, which was filled by the appointment of Silas Wright, then Comptroller of the State. Azariah C. Flagg became Comptroller in Mr. Wright's place, and General Dix was made Secretary of State, in the place of Mr. Flagg. His appointment, January 15, 1833, was accepted on the following day.

With the opening of that year came a renewal of excitement in the political world. The policy of the government on the tariff question had assumed a grave significance in consequence of the action of South Carolina, where the doctrine was now advanced that a State has the right to nullify the

laws of Congress and secede from the Union. The President had already announced, in a proclamation dated December 10, 1832, the course which he intended to take in case the advocates of nullification should force a crisis; and, as an administration measure, a bill was pending in Congress, introduced by Mr. Verplanck, chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means in the House of Representatives, which had for its object a reduction of the tariff, with a view to such limitation of the revenues of the country to its expenditures as should be consistent with the simplicity of the government and an efficient public service. This reduction was strongly opposed by the manufacturing interest in the Northern and Eastern sections of the country. Under these circumstances a move was made in Albany to obtain, if possible, an expression of public opinion adverse to the Tariff Bill; and for that purpose a public meeting was called, to take action, as was said, on the President's proclamation and on Mr. Verplanck's measure. The promoters of this movement appear to have concealed their object so successfully as to induce large numbers of the President's friends to sign the call; but when they discovered that the real design was, while approving the course of the President toward the South Carolina malcontents, to oppose, and instruct our representatives in Congress to oppose, any farther legislation on the tariff, the indignation of the victims of the *ruse* was intense, and they resolved to repair to the meeting, defeat its objects, and give true expression to their sentiments on questions before the people. The leading part in this programme was assigned to the newly-chosen Secretary of State.

The meeting was held in the City Hall. It was called to order, and organized without opposition, by those who had originally moved in the affair. Then a series of resolutions was read; but before the question could be taken on their adoption General Dix arose and asked a hearing. He said that he was not prepared to give his assent to all the resolutions; to those which related to the tariff he felt it his duty to object; and he moved, as a substitute, a series which

he read. A scene of great confusion followed; an attempt was made to prevent him from being heard; but loud cries at once arose from all parts of the hall, and he was called to the main staircase, whence he addressed the assemblage in a speech which was received with long and loud applause. Subsequently the uproar was renewed, and a scene of tumult was presented which the witnesses describe as beggaring description, with shouts and cries of "Order!" "Question on the substitute," "Question on the resolutions," etc., the original promoters of the meeting exhausting their efforts to control the assembly. At this stage of proceedings Mr. Livingston, ascending the staircase, exclaimed, at the top of his clear voice, "*Friends of Andrew Jackson and of the substitute, to the Capitol! Here we have no fair chance of being heard!*" The cry was echoed by a thousand voices; some two-thirds of those present at once left the building and, with loud cheers, proceeded to the Capitol. The great hall of that edifice was filled to overflowing in a very few minutes. Judge Sutherland was called to the chair; Chancellor Walworth and General Gansevoort were appointed vice-presidents, and General Dix and William Seymour, secretaries. Addresses were made by gentlemen previously prevented from speaking; an enthusiastic endorsement of the administration was given; and resolutions offered by General Dix, and including the substitute previously offered by him at the City Hall, were adopted with great cheering and without a dissenting voice; while copies of his speech, and of that of Mr. Benjamin F. Butler, were requested for publication.

There are parts of this address which have a prophetic sound; they breathe that intense devotion to the Union which was with him a ruling passion. Alluding to the spectre of Secession, even then looming on the view, he said:

"If the value of the Union shall be drawn into doubt for a moment in the mind of any one, let him advert to the condition of the country when it was formed: let him follow out its history during the half-century, now nearly complete, that we have lived under it: let him contemplate

the wealth, the strength, the national character, the public security, and, above all, the internal tranquillity, which it has brought. Let him learn from all this the value of that sacred tie which binds us together as one people, vast as is the surface over which we are spread, uniting those who with an unconquerable enterprise have penetrated the forests beyond the Alleghanies with the regions of cultivation from which they came. And then let him turn to the reverse of the picture. Let him merely contemplate the first fruits of disunion. Let him behold the fabric of our government, the only existing monument to popular liberty, upturned from its deepest foundations; disorder and confusion overspreading the face of the land; hostile forces, bearing the same fraternal blood, arrayed against each other, and animated by new and unnatural impulses into the most fierce and unrelenting animosity. Finally, let him behold the seceding State appealing to some foreign power for protection against her sisters, whose fellowship she had abjured; and from the proud condition of equality in the noblest Union of free and enlightened States the world ever saw, sinking, irretrievably sinking, into the degradation of Colonial dependence! I envy not the man who can dwell without emotion upon scenes like these—who can stand without faltering upon the precipice of disunion and look into the abyss beneath. . . .

"The considerations by which the necessity of preserving the Union is supported are not to be measured by our own interests alone. I have said, and I repeat, that it is connected with the cause of liberal institutions throughout the world. A separation of these States would be a direct retrogradation in the career of free government. Such an event would come strongly in aid of the principles which in other countries are arrayed against the extension of popular rights. It behooves us, then, to advert to the relation which we bear to other nations. We stand before the world in a position which no other country ever occupied. Our social and political institutions; the great results which we have accomplished by our enterprise and industry in converting a vast wilderness from barrenness to fertility; the principles of political right, which we have reduced to successful practice upon a theatre almost unbounded in extent, attract to us the attention of the whole civilized world. The friends of free government, wherever they are to be found, turn to us as to the last hope of liberal institutions; and with an anxiety the more intense, as all the lessons which history has furnished have for them been lessons of discouragement. On us is devolved the solemn responsibility of solving the problem, whether the highest degree of social happiness and political liberty may, under the same form of government, be combined with strength, security, and wide extent of territory. We are literally performing an experiment which may settle forever the

competency of mankind to self-government. A vast responsibility rests upon us, a responsibility to be measured, not by our interests alone, but by the power of our example over the fortunes of other countries; a responsibility only to be borne and fulfilled by maintaining inviolate, in the whole extent of their application, the great principles which we have assumed and announced to the world as the only just basis of human government.

"Let us, then, deeply impressed with a sense of this high responsibility, esteem no other obligation so imperious as that of discharging it. Let us not forget that the fabric of this Union, once torn from its foundations, can never be reconstructed with its present proportions and strength; that no human art can re-assemble its scattered materials, and relay them as they now are laid. . . . Let us do all that justice, all that liberality demands. Let us discharge every obligation due to fraternal friendship and union. . . . When we shall have done all this, if the tempests of disaffection shall still overspread our political horizon, menacing the durability of government and of civil liberty—if the storm must come—then may we, with no other regret than that which so painful an alternative must excite, rally around the Constitution of the country, and, in the language of the Declaration of Independence, pledge to each other 'our lives, our property, and our sacred honor' for its defence."

Never was a political body in better condition or more thoroughly organized than the Democratic Republican party at the beginning of Governor Marcy's administration. It is refreshing to look back and study the character and quality of the men who then held the reins. At the head of the nation was General Jackson, distinguished not more for his iron will, nerve, and determination than for his exalted patriotism and unchallenged honesty and integrity. Mr. Van Buren, one of the ablest and purest of statesmen, occupied the Vice-President's chair, as chief officer of the United States Senate. Governor Marcy was a man of extraordinary ability—calm, wise, judicious. The officers of the State Government were: John Tracy, Lieutenant-governor; John A. Dix, Secretary of State; Azariah C. Flagg, Comptroller; Greene C. Bronson, Attorney-general; and Abraham Keyser, Treasurer. The President enjoyed an immense and well-deserved popularity; the banking interest was on the side of the government; An-

timasonry was practically defunct. Those were halcyon days. In the State of New York the practical control of affairs was in the hands of a small number of men, to whom Mr. Weed had given the name of "The Albany Regency." Prominent among them were Silas Wright, Edwin Croswell, Benjamin Knower, James Porter, and General Dix. They were men of great sagacity and, above all, honest—as it has been well remarked, aggressively honest; not satisfied with being above reproach themselves, but refusing to tolerate in those whom they could control what their own fine sense of honor did not approve. The action of the Democratic party was determined by the deliberations of these leading men; they ruled with a sway under which public affairs were sure to be prudently and ably administered. With the Governor they were in constant and confidential communication. I have heard my father relate how they were always favored with the first reading of Mr. Marcy's Messages, which he submitted to their censure or approval before sending them to the Legislature; and that on such occasions they endeavored to ascertain what portions the Governor deemed best, with a view to make them the special mark of criticism. Mr. Thurlow Weed, now far advanced in years, and probably more familiar than any living man with the history of the politics of the State of New York, in a conversation which I held with him recently,* broke forth into an eloquent panegyric on the old Regency. Himself one of their most earnest and honest opponents in those days, he yet bore witness to their virtues, and said that he had never known a body of men who possessed so much power and used it so well. Their enemies, he added, found neither flaw in their character nor blot on their names, nor could they ever gain an advantage over them, excepting in those rare instances in which they made mistakes in their policy, thereby showing themselves to be fallible men.

General Dix held the office of Secretary of State from

* Written in July, 1880.

February 1, 1833, until February 4, 1839. His labors during those six years were incessant. The subject of public education belonged to his department, since the Secretary of State was also Superintendent of Common Schools; and to him, undoubtedly, the State of New York is indebted in great measure for its Public School system. An act of the Legislature was passed May 2, 1834, entitled, "*An Act concerning the Literature Fund.*" As it related to the education of the teachers of our common-schools, under the direction of the Regents of the University, a certified copy of it was sent to that Board. They referred it to Messrs. Dix, Buel, and Graham, with directions to prepare and present to the Regents a plan for carrying the provisions of the act into operation. The report, written by Mr. Dix, as chairman of the committee of reference, was given to the Regents at their annual meeting, January 8, 1835. It forms the basis of the system of education of teachers in the common-schools of this State.

An examination of this report, which is contained in the second volume of the "Speeches and Occasional Addresses," cannot fail to interest those who regard the liberal education of its future citizens as essential to the stability of a free government. The writer, after reviewing the systems pursued in France, Germany, and Prussia, gives an historical sketch of common-school instruction in this State. The leading and acknowledged defect of the schools at that day was the want of competent instructors; the object aimed at was to remedy that defect, and to make our system of popular instruction equal in efficiency, as it was then superior in extent, in proportion to our population, to any other in the world. The plan of establishing separate seminaries for the training of teachers appears to have been abandoned by the Legislature; it was considered more advantageous to engraft on existing academies departments of instruction for that purpose. The report recommends the establishment of such higher courses of instruction at a sufficient number of points to be easily accessible from every county in the State; and considers, among

other topics, the course and subjects of study, the duration of the course, and the necessary books and apparatus, together with the evidence of qualification to teach, which shall be given by individuals trained in those higher departments. On all these points the recommendations of the report are practical and minute.

I cannot conclude this hasty sketch of an interesting state paper without presenting to the reader two extracts as specimens of its style and substance. The first of those relates to the object of education:

"It should not be for a moment forgotten that the object of education is, not merely to amass the greatest possible amount of information, but at the same time to develop and discipline the intellectual and moral faculties. It is in vain that the stores of knowledge are enlarged, if the skill to apply them for useful purposes be not also acquired. At every step the mind should be taught to rely on the exercise of its own powers. The pupils should be required to assign reasons for every position assumed in their various studies, not barely with a view to give them a thorough comprehension of the subject, but for the purpose also of cultivating that habit of critical investigation which is unsatisfied until every part of the subject of inquiry is understood. The result of common-school education in most cases is to burden the memory with facts and rules, of which the proper practical operation is but imperfectly comprehended. This defect is at war with the spirit of the age, which is to probe to its inmost depths every subject of knowledge, and to convert the results of our inquiries to useful purposes. Practical usefulness is the great end of intellectual discipline; it should be kept steadily in view by the teacher; and he will soon learn that his lesson, when its reason and its object are presented to the mind of his pupil, will arouse an interest which, in the absence of this full understanding of the subject, he would have labored in vain to excite.

"In the present condition of our common schools much time is lost and labor misapplied by injudicious systems of instruction; they are fields for collecting facts and details rather than for disciplining the faculties. This radical error should be corrected. Pupils should be made to think for themselves, instead of treasuring up merely the results of other men's thoughts. The great instrument of reform will be to make demonstration keep pace with knowledge. Nothing should be left unexplained; nor should anything be allowed to rest on mere authority, excepting where, from the nature of the subject, it admits of no other foundation."

The following picture of the teacher must, I think, have been painted from recollection of the dignified and conscientious guides of his own youth:

"The committee cannot forbear to add that the instructors, in the academies with which the proposed departments may be connected, should labor to impress on the minds of those who may be preparing themselves for the vocation of teachers a deep sense of the responsibility which belongs to it. There is, in truth, no other in which a conscientious and discreet discharge of its appropriate duties can well produce more beneficial or lasting effects. It is from the conduct and precepts of the teacher that the minds committed to his guidance are destined to receive impressions which may accompany the individuals through life, and give a determining cast to the character. In his demeanor they may read impressive lessons of moderation, forbearance, and self-control; from his rules of government they may learn the value of firmness, justice, and impartiality; or they may find, in exhibitions of petulance, unsteadiness of purpose, and unjust distributions of favor, a license for the indulgence of their own prejudices and passions. Nothing is more vital to the successful government of the teacher, and to the execution of his plans of instruction, than a steady self-command. The most certain mode of bringing his own authority into contempt is to show that he is not his own master. The moral atmosphere of the school-room will be pure or impure according to the conduct and character of him who presides over it. On his example will, in no inconsiderable degree, depend, for good or evil, the destiny of numbers whose influence will, in turn, be felt by the political society in the operations of which they are to take an active part. The teacher should be made to feel so sensibly the importance of his position, that it may be continually present to his thoughts, and become the guide and rule of his actions. He should bear perpetually in mind that he is the centre of a little system, which, as time advances, is destined to spread itself out and carry with it, for the benefit or injury of all whom it reaches, the moral influences imparted by himself."

With another department of our State annals General Dix's name is honorably associated: I refer to the Geological Survey of the State of New York. By resolution of the Assembly, dated April 18, 1835, the Secretary of State was "requested to report to the Legislature, at its next session, the most expedient method of obtaining a complete geologi-

cal survey of the State, which shall furnish a scientific and perfect account of its rocks, soils, and minerals, and of their localities; a list of all its mineralogical, botanical, and zoological productions, and provide for procuring and preserving specimens of the same; together with an estimate of the expenses which may attend the prosecution of the design, and of the cost of publication of an edition of three thousand copies of the report, drawings, and geological map of the results."

Such were the large instructions of the Legislature; and I remember to this day the effect produced on our household. My father was delighted at the additional work thus thrown on him, and particularly at its character; he began at once to collect materials, and inform himself fully on the vast subject committed to him. The house was soon flooded with books on geology; Lyell, Mantell, and other authors appeared, and we children used to wonder at the plates representing incomprehensible monsters (the Plesiosaurus, the Megatherium, the Pterodactyl, and heaven knows what other shapes), which, far more awful than any in the "Arabian Nights," confronted us as we peeped into those mysterious volumes. The General became an enthusiastic student of these works, and enlisted the family for the same pursuit. He entered into correspondence with the persons then looked up to as authorities in physical science; he was knee-deep in rocks and minerals, organic remains and alluvial detritus, and the treasure of the animal and floral kingdoms. The result may be seen in his report to the Legislature, dated January 6, 1836, and in the subsequent appearance of that great work known as the "Natural History of the State of New York." It was commenced in the year 1837, continued at intervals during a period of nearly a quarter of a century, and although, I believe, not yet completed, already consists of 23 thick quartos, containing innumerable illustrations of the text. This work was the substantial outcome of the report made by General Dix to the Legislature of the State in response to their instructions in 1835.

It is hardly necessary to remark that in these labors General Dix had the sympathy of scientific gentlemen throughout the country, who watched with interest the progress of so grand a scheme. Professor Silliman writes to him from New Haven, July 11, 1835, as follows:

"I am gratified that your great and important territory is about to be surveyed geologically, and that all its natural productions are to be taken into the account.

"Our first anxiety should be that the work be thoroughly done, and that neither the time, the money, nor the men requisite to a masterly survey should be stinted. No doubt you will feel that the honor of the State as well as its interests and those of our country demand that a liberal and enlarged view should be taken of the subject. My friend and pupil, Professor Hitchcock, has done nobly in his survey of Massachusetts, considering the means that were placed at his disposal—still, I should regret to see the enterprise commenced in New York even upon the Massachusetts scale. The plan, no doubt you will agree, should be such as to furnish time, means, and inducements adequate to an investigation of the most thorough character."

Governor Cass writes thus:

"Washington, January 25, 1836.

"DEAR SIR,—I am greatly obliged to you for your report. You have condensed, within the narrowest compass, a vast mass of the most important information, a complete sketch of the natural kingdoms of your State. I do trust that New York will carry out this plan. It would be a glorious monument to all of you.

"I am, dear Sir, truly yours, LEW. CASS.

"GENERAL DIX."

His old friend, General Upham, to whom he referred with such warmth in his autobiographical sketch, wrote to him on the same subject:

"Portsmouth, N. H., January 30, 1836.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your report to the Legislature of New York in relation to a Geological Survey of that State. I have read it with attention, and have derived from it much valuable information. I beg to tender you sincere thanks for this renewed mark of your attention. The pleasure I received from it is greatly increased by the recollections of our early acquaintance, and

the deep (I had almost permitted myself to add parental) interest with which I have followed your subsequent course and rapid advancement. It has been to me a constant source of gratification to learn that in every station you have occupied the just expectations of your friends have been realized.

"The confidence and applause of political friends follow, as a matter of course, the display of talents, industry, and extraordinary exertions in support of the principles they have adopted; it seems to be your good fortune, my dear Sir, to enjoy the confidence and respect of your political opponents—at least, I have reason to believe it so, for from such has my information respecting you been obtained.

"That you may through life enjoy the consolations of an approving conscience, and at the last receive the Heavenly benediction, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant,' is the sincere and ardent prayer of your old friend and

"Most obedient servant,

"Tim°. Upham.

"General John A. Dix, Albany, N. Y."

I shall add no more to this brief notice of a work which reflects lasting honor on all who had a hand in it; few at this day know, and those who knew have probably forgotten, that the first impulse to that successful enterprise came from my father's hand. I have often wondered how he found time to do so much, or how he bore the fatigue of his official duties. I have referred to his labors in connection with three subjects of vast importance: the military system of the State, the education of its youth, and the description of its physical structure and resources. This by no means completes the catalogue of the results of the labors of those years. The State Library at Albany contains the following documents, in addition to the reports to which I have called the reader's attention:

1. Decisions of the Superintendent of Common Schools of the State of New York. Selected and arranged by John A. Dix, Superintendent. . . . Published by the Legislature. Albany, 1837, pp. viii., 479. 8vo.

(All these decisions are either by Azariah C. Flagg or John A. Dix. Each decision shows who was the author of it.)

2. Annual Reports of the Secretary of State and Superintendent of Common Schools, as follows:

(*a*) January 8, 1834, pp. 104, of which 30 are the report proper.
(*b*) " 7, 1835, " 107, " 34 " " "
(*c*) " 6, 1836, " 120, " 47 " " "
(*d*) " 1837,
(*e*) " 5, 1838, " 109, " 25 " " "
(*f*) " 3, 1839, " 163, " 44 " " "

At the end of this last report are some very interesting observations on the libraries of the district schools, a subject in which he took great interest.

3. Special Reports by the Secretary of State, during a period of six years, among which are one respecting convictions for criminal offences, and another made when transmitting reports of the New York and Erie Railroad Company.

It is a remarkable fact that murders were so rare in those days that, whenever one occurred, it gave a shock to the community. My impression is that during one year there was not a single conviction for murder in the State of New York. I remember a house which stood near the roadside, a little way below the city; in it a man named John Whipple was murdered by one Jesse Strang, who was tried, convicted, and executed in the summer of 1827. The peculiar circumstances of the case gave it notoriety; and the scene of the crime had a mysterious fascination for us. We children never passed that way without profound sensations, whispering that it was the house in which "*the* murder" was committed. Now there is a murder every day, and few give it a second thought, so familiar are we grown with that primal, monstrous outrage against God and man.

Reference has been made to the thorough organization of the Democratic Republican party during Governor Marcy's administration. A powerful combination against it was formed by a union of all the elements opposed to the State and national administrations. The success of this new movement was in great measure due to the derangement of business and

consequent financial distress occasioned by the action of the President in withdrawing the government deposits from the Bank of the United States at Philadelphia and placing them in local State institutions. This measure, although resisted by Congress, and even by the Secretary of the Treasury, was pushed on by General Jackson, who preferred discharging his Minister of Finance, and appointing another of his own mind, to failure in carrying out his pet measure. The consequent contraction of the currency, and the disasters to which it gave rise, brought on a revulsion throughout the country, the people reproaching the national administration as the authors of their distress. In the State of New York the evils referred to were not so seriously felt as elsewhere, and the elections of 1834 resulted in another victory for the Democratic party. Their position, however, was rapidly becoming critical, confronted as they were by a powerful coalition of National Republicans and Antimasons. The candidate of the opposition in 1834 was William H. Seward; a man destined to achieve, within a few years, a political triumph in the State of New York, and subsequently to attain honorable as well as perilous distinction in the trying years of the Civil War.

Governor Marcy, in his annual Message to the Legislature in 1836, referred to the dangers to be anticipated from a spirit of wild and reckless speculation which was then abroad. It appears to have been the result of great national prosperity. Our foreign credit was good, the products of agriculture commanded a high price, and, since nothing seemed easier than to make money, every one hastened to grow rich. It is said that the passion for speculation in stocks and real estate prevailed to an extent unknown in this country before that day. Extravagant schemes of internal improvement were thrust before the Legislature, who were clamorously besieged by the demand for appropriations of the public money to carry them into effect. In vain the Governor protested against pledging the State credit in aid of public works until the Legislature should have provided, by taxation or otherwise, for paying

the interest on loans for that purpose. To these and similar subjects General Dix alludes in a letter addressed to the Vice-President. The letter runs thus:

"Albany, June 4, 1836.

"My dear Sir,—It was my intention to have written to you long ago; but, to tell the truth, I had none but unpleasant topics, and I supposed Washington would furnish vexation enough to try your equanimity without superadding our own. We had, as you may imagine, a most disagreeable winter; and although, as I said in a letter to Mr. Wright early in the session of the Legislature, I had more apprehension on the subject of internal improvements than banks, the friends of both continued so to mix them up together that we have added near six millions of dollars to our bank capital, and provided for increasing our public debt about seven millions. The legislation of the whole winter has been a matter of bargain and sale; and if we cannot get a different class of men into the Legislature, the sooner we go into a minority the better. We have been betrayed by the inordinate spirit of speculation which is abroad. It has taken possession of too many of our own political friends; and it is not to be disguised that their conduct is more under the regulation of pecuniary considerations than motives of a higher origin and character. Our electoral ticket will save us next fall; but, unless our selections for the Legislature are more judicious than they were last year, another session will wind up our concerns for a short time, at least. I should lament such a change; but I consider it infinitely preferable to the state of things which we have had this winter. We must have less strength or more virtue, if we would administer the affairs of the State either for our own honor or the public good. The indications of a wholesome purification of our legislative halls are favorable. Only two papers in the State assail Colonel Young and Mr. Van Schaick: not one undertakes to defend Kemble and Bishop,* except the *Troy Budget*, which is edited by the former. If the people will look to their candidates for office this fall, we may do something next winter to retrieve our reputation; but much mischief has been done which cannot be re-

* Messrs. Kemble and Bishop were charged before the Senate with fraudulent speculations in stocks, and with complicity in the transactions of a defaulting cashier. Kemble resigned his seat before the question was acted on. Bishop was found guilty of moral and official misconduct, yet there was a majority against his expulsion. Upon this Colonel Young and Mr. Van Schaick resigned, saying that they would not belong to a body which recognized as members men whom, by their official vote, they had found guilty of flagrant misdoings.

paired. The vote in the Senate on Bishop's case can only be cured by expunging—a remedy I hope to see applied.

"In relation to our internal improvements there is still great cause for apprehension. Our troubles with the New York and Erie Railroad are, perhaps, but just commenced. I anticipate an application from the company at the opening of the next session of the Legislature for an immediate loan of three millions, without waiting for any part of the road to be completed. Indeed, I should not be surprised if we were to have an application to complete the road at the expense of the State. I have no faith in the project; and I think we should take ground against any farther countenance of it on the part of the State, even though we lose the southern tier of counties by such a course. The history of the Chenango Canal furnishes a precedent, of which we are constantly feeling the ill effects. It has stimulated other counties to put a price on their political fidelity. Whenever a local project is started we are threatened with the dereliction of the regions interested in it unless it is carried as a party measure. The principle involved in the success of applications advocated on such grounds is corrupt, and must be fatal if conceded. If we must purchase with appropriations of money the political fidelity of every county which can get up a scheme of local improvement, we shall within ten years, if not in half that time, be obliged to sell out to some great banking institution, in order to recruit our pecuniary resources; and without the excuse which Pennsylvania has—that of continuing in existence an institution already established within her own territory. Indeed, I have some fears that we may find difficulty in sustaining our present pecuniary burdens, as there appears to be a settled determination that not a single dollar shall be raised by taxation for the support of the government.

"I trust we shall see you soon; but, from all appearances, I suppose that Congress will not adjourn until the latter part of the month.

"I am, dear Sir, yours respectfully and truly,

"JOHN A. DIX.

"Hon. M. VAN BUREN."

In a letter to a private friend he makes some forcible remarks on the same theme:

"Albany, November 28, 1836.

"MY DEAR ——, S—— and B—— have failed. I entreated the former long ago to give up speculations. Sudden prosperity is the lot of but a few, while the pursuit of it seduces thousands to their ruin. . . .

"We are on the eve of one of the severest reactions in business of almost every description with which we have been visited for years. I

have expected it for months. Those who can live through the present year may save themselves; but the pressure has, I think, but just commenced. Speculation is the great cause of the evil. It has deranged everything, and locked up, where it cannot be reached, a vast amount of capital. Time will release the capital so diverted, but not until large numbers of persons shall have fallen before the storm which is about to sweep over the community. Do not set me down for a croaker. I speak strongly, with the hope that you may learn a lesson from it. Eschew speculation. Consider industry and frugality as the true sources of wealth; and, if you are never opulent, you will at least be secure from those disasters which are brought on by putting what little one has at hazard."

The elections of 1836 resulted in a victory for the Democratic candidates. Martin Van Buren was elected President; William L. Marcy was re-elected Governor of the State of New York, and by a majority of nearly thirty thousand votes. Mr. Van Buren was inaugurated March 4, 1837; Governor Marcy continued in office; and the Legislature re-elected Silas Wright for the six years' term in the Senate of the United States. The ascendency of the Democratic party was complete.

"Never," says Hammond, in referring to that epoch, "did a political party whose ascendency depended on the voice of a free and intelligent people seem more firmly and permanently established than the Democratic party in the State of New York in the winter of 1837.

"In the Executive chair of the nation their former leader and favorite son was fixed, at least for four years to come; their Governor—a man confessed by his opponents to possess talents which eminently qualified him for his station, and a most spotless private character—had been re-elected by the unprecedented majority of 29,000; in the popular branch of the State government nearly two to one of the members were Democrats, and in the Senate, the permanent body, they held a majority of more than five to one. In every town and county in the State the Democratic party was perfect in its organization and discipline, and at the same time the moneyed

interest in the State was most decidedly in favor of sustaining both the State and National administrations."

It took but a very little time, however, to pull their house down about the heads of those who deemed themselves secure for years to come—the customary successes turned to ruinous defeats. The reverses of the Democratic party were due mainly to their position on those questions of finance which so often frustrate the wisdom of men and make political diviners mad. The suspension of specie payments in the spring of 1837, just before the adjournment of the New York Legislature, became general throughout the United States, and spread consternation in every direction. It would be difficult for one outside the political field to enumerate, or even to comprehend, the varied phenomena of the agitation of that day. But in reading the history of the period I was struck by the prominence given to the question about the disposal of the funds of the government. The revenues of the nation: where should they be kept? Not in a national bank; that plan had been tried; and General Jackson had destroyed the Bank of the United States, to the satisfaction of local institutions, which found their profit in the overthrow of the gigantic monster. In those State banks, then? That plan had also been tried, and with bad results: they were regarded by the President and his leading advisers as unsafe. The conclusion reached was, that the government should do its own banking business; that there ought to be a total separation of the business and property of the National Government from the business and concerns of State institutions. President Van Buren urged this on Congress in a Message recommending a scheme of an Independent Treasury. An extra session of Congress was called for September 4 to consider this subject. The result was to array the local banking interest against the administration.

Then there was more trouble, and in more dangerous quarters, about the currency. An act had passed the Legislature, March 31, 1835, prohibiting the issue of bank bills below the

denomination of five dollars. Many able men would have gone much farther, favoring such a system as that prevailing in England, where the five-pound note ($25) is the smallest denomination, and people must use gold and silver in all transactions below that sum. The measure referred to was very unpopular; an attempt to repeal the act was defeated; the popular outcry against it rose to angry denunciation, and the party in power were accused, not only as having brought on a serious evil, but as obstinately determined that it should not be abated.

The Albany Regency were divided on some of these questions. General Dix stood firm in his hard money convictions, and in favor of the separation of the government business from that of State institutions, although he foresaw the danger which must ensue to the administration. I quote from a letter on the subject, dated at Albany, August 26, 1837:

"I dread nothing so much in this country as the influence of pecuniary interests upon government. The danger to be apprehended from a great moneyed institution is sufficiently apparent in the history of the United States Bank. From a large number of small institutions at a distance from each other, and apparently incapable of any concert of action, there would seem to be no cause for apprehension. But I am not sure that they may not, by an intercommunication of views, accomplish as much as a single institution of larger capital. They have certainly the advantage that they move by detachments, and do not create the agitation or excite the alarm which are attendant on the movement of a single body of greater force. Individuals in their interest may be put in office in different districts without any apparent concert, until a sufficient number is obtained to control the action of the government. Such attempts were made by the United States Bank, and they are likely to be repeated by the State banks. Indeed, some movements have recently been made in this State which indicate a settled purpose to build up a Bank party. Whatever may come, the Democratic party should

have no connection with it. I have no hostility to the State banks; I would not break them down, nor would I oppress them by imposing on them unnecessarily severe restrictions. But their abuses should be corrected with an unflinching hand; and the first indications of an attempt to throw into our legislative bodies individuals in their interest should be resisted by every friend of free government.

"I consider the prevailing derangement of our moneyed affairs as having been brought on principally by over-banking. The Legislature of this State has been exceedingly liberal to our banks, by releasing them for a limited time from the penalties which they had incurred by pre-existing laws, in consequence of suspending specie payments. They should be contented with this indulgence, protecting them, as it does, against the consequences of their own imprudence, and exert every effort to resume specie payments. I fear they are not all disposed to do so. There are a few sound bankers who are doing all they can to accomplish the object at the earliest practicable day. But a large portion of the banks will, I am satisfied, resist as long as they can, and finally, if compelled, come into the measure with reluctance. All the speculators in the State, together with those who owe the banks more money than they can pay, are averse to the resumption of specie payments. They know that the restoration of a sound state of things will be their ruin. But their ruin is inevitable, whether the banks resume or not; and if they could be saved by postponing a resumption, it would be unjust to nineteen-twentieths of the whole community, who are sustaining injury for the benefit of the other twentieth. The worst feature in the aspect of the times is the total insensibility of a large portion of the community to the character of a suspension of specie payments in a moral point of view. I regard it as disgraceful in the highest degree. It was brought on by mismanagement and fraud, for the sound banks in this State would have sustained themselves if they had not been broken down by the weak and dishonest ones. To continue such a state of

things unnecessarily for a single day would be the grossest dishonesty.

"These measures should be insisted on as indispensable to a sound state of the moral and political body:

"1. Let the banks resume specie payments at the earliest practicable day.

"2. Expel from circulation all notes under $20—not too hastily, but gradually, and without doing violence to existing interests.

"3. Establish some general law by which capital may be employed in banking with special acts of incorporation, so that the legislative body may not be in danger of being corrupted by combinations to control it for mercenary ends.

"4. Separate the government from all banking institutions in the collection and disbursement of its revenue.

"If these objects are not accomplished I shall have serious apprehensions for the purity of the government. Corruption and profligacy are inseparable from the control of moneyed influences. Banks accomplish their objects by loans and discounts; these appliances are a part of their machinery, and the suggestion that such means may not be legitimately employed for the purpose of promoting the interest of an institution by gaining over individuals to its views would be considered, by most of them, as savoring of squeamishness, if not of absolute folly. The more distant such establishments are from the government the better. They are the ministers of commerce; they should desire to serve no other master. Above all, should they not desire to play the master over those whose breath has warmed them into life, the people. I am sorry to say that too many who stand to these institutions in the relation of stockholders, or in the still more delicate one of debtors, are busy in seeking to give to our local politics a direction in favor of them—in other words, to protect the banks against the people. These movements are exceedingly ill-judged. There is no danger that the people will act harshly; and the distrust which is manifested as to their intentions

betrays, at least, a consciousness that their confidence has been abused."

This letter has in it the very ring of the precious metals; and I can say that my father's views on these points never changed. He was, to the end of his life, a hard-money man; he opposed the legal-tender act, even as a war measure; he believed in nothing but a coin basis for private and public business; he abhorred suspension of specie payments; and it is a fact that he always carried some few pieces of gold coin with him, even through all the paper-money years during and after the war. The precious metals alone he regarded as real money; and he deplored the measures by which they were banished from circulation. And I confess to being unable to understand why the English system should succeed, in which all transactions involving sums less than five pounds must be carried on in coin, while Americans seem unable to exist without bank-notes of small denominations, and even now lament the want of that detestable fractional currency which was for so long a time a medium of exchange, down even to bills for three cents. It is one of the marvels of which we outsiders would be happy to have a thoroughly satisfactory solution. Yet it is a matter of history that the defeat of the Democratic party was due in part to its position on the bank-note question; and it is said that the opponent of Governor Marcy, himself a man of comparatively small stature, received the affectionate soubriquet of "Small Bill Seward," expressive of the confidence of the people that his election would result in restoring to them their notes of small denomination, invidiously termed "shin-plasters" by their adversaries. On that point the convictions of the average American appear to be settled past all power to change them.

Misfortunes rarely come single, but by twos and threes, if not in droves; it was so at that time. The dominant party, represented by the State administration, made additional enemies by taking the course which any respectable party in power at the time must have taken in an unfortunate and

disagreeable emergency. I refer to those outbreaks which occurred in Canada about the close of the year 1837, when certain persons styling themselves "Patriots," or "Sons of Liberty," and led by Louis Joseph Papineau, at Montreal, and William Lyon Mackenzie, in Toronto, made an ill-judged and abortive attempt at obtaining independence. It is loss of time to study the movement, which from the outset was destined to failure; I mention the affair only because of the damage which resulted indirectly to Governor Marcy's administration. To preserve neutrality, and prevent Americans from aiding the insurgents, were the obvious duties of the national and State governments; but the excitable and the ignorant do not discriminate on such occasions, and political enemies easily reap advantage from such a position of affairs. It need hardly be said that there was a strong sympathy with the insurgents, especially in the parts of the State bordering on the Canadian line. The causes which led to the outbreak were analogous to those which brought on our own Revolution: it was the old dispute between the constitutional and monarchical ideas; whether the Canadians should govern themselves by their own legislatures, or be governed by the British Parliament. So the affair had a thorough republican smack about it, which naturally took the American fancy; and when the defeat came, and the leaders were in flight from the British regulars and loyal militia, and when many poor fellows were lying dead in the blood-stained snow, and not a few were swinging from gibbets, and some were hunted for the price set on their heads, and refugees were coming across our lines, sympathy became indignation. The party in power at such a time must suffer. Bound to observe the rules of international law and the comity of sovereign states, it fulfils its duty at the expense of popularity. No doubt Governor Marcy lost many votes, especially in the frontier counties, where sympathy for the miserable rebels was strong and men were eye-witnesses of their tribulation.

To the family of General Dix the Canadian *émeute* had

more than a political interest; it came straight into the home circle. Among the leading families of Canada none were more conspicuous at that time than the Baldwins. They were connections of ours by marriage, and communication was constant between the households in Toronto, New York, and Albany. The Hon. Robert Baldwin, at one time District Attorney of the Upper Province, was a man of great intelligence, and conspicuous for patriotism and enlightened statesmanship. To him, together with Dr. Baldwin, Dr. Rolph, and Mr. Marshall S. Bidwell, the Liberal party in Canada had been accustomed to look for advice and direction. Mr. Bidwell was requested by Sir Francis Head, the Governor-general, to leave the province at once, not from any suspicion that he was concerned in Mackenzie's movement, but because of his well-known political opinions and supposed influence. Dr. Rolph escaped with difficulty; a price of £500 was offered for his capture; if taken he would undoubtedly have been executed. There was much anxiety lest some of the Baldwins might have become objects of suspicion; and although it soon became evident by their letters that there was no ground for that alarm, the circumstances gave to what would otherwise have been a mere political question the painful interest of a possible domestic calamity.*

Thus little by little the trouble grew, and the Democratic horizon became darker day by day. The fall election of 1837 was a warning of the disasters of the following year: the Whig party carried the State, or rather swept it, gaining six out of eight Senatorial districts, and electing 101 out of 128 members of Assembly. General Dix foresaw what was coming next, and probably felt that it could not be averted. Writing to Mr. Morgan on the 16th of December, he says:

"Between ourselves, I have become recently greatly discouraged at our political prospects—not because there is any need of our being beaten another year, but because conserva-

* See Appendix, No. II.

tism is likely to be kept alive by the conduct of influential individuals here, who by means of speculations have become the dependents of banking institutions. Mr. Flagg and myself have both within the last two or three days been separately sounded with regard to the expediency of repealing the small-bill law for a limited time, and both of us took strong ground against it. It will, however, be carried, and most probably with the consent and approbation of almost every one here, excepting Mr. Flagg and myself; for it unfortunately happens that we are almost the only ones who are not connected with the banks in the relation of stockholders, directors, or debtors. The course of things here this winter will be, in all probability, to disgust still more the sound Republicans, and to keep up the divisions which defeated us this fall. I shall, therefore, make up my mind to go out of office next winter.

"I consider the present attitude of the banks equally dishonorable and immoral. There is no shadow of an excuse for continuing the suspension of specie payments a single day longer."

It may be noted that the reaction against the Democratic party was felt even in their stronghold, the city of New York. Mr. Morgan was candidate for Mayor that year. He was defeated by Aaron Clark, the Whig nominee. Much amusement was caused in our home circle by one of the political caricatures of the day, which represented my grandfather as going forth to his official duties, warmly wrapped up in overcoat, muffler, and ample capes, and attended by servants bearing pillows, umbrellas, overshoes, and similar articles. It was a smart allusion to his habits, which were those of one who had preserved his health only by great care, and owed his sound condition to the avoidance of exposure and a strict and temperate regimen. The joke was a fair one, and fully appreciated.

And so at length came on the long-dreaded day. In the autumn of 1838 William H. Seward and Luther Bradish were

elected Governor and Lieutenant-governor of the State of New York, and William L. Marcy and John Tracy yielded, with dignity, to the fiat of the people. The inauguration of the new State officers took place January 1, 1839. A caucus of the Whig members of the Legislature was held January 31, to nominate State officers, and on the 4th of February ensuing General Dix withdrew to private life, and gave place to John C. Spencer, his able and accomplished successor. As if to fill up the measure of their misfortunes, the Democrats lost their majority in the Senate in the elections of the following autumn, a majority which the party had held during eighteen successive years. It was the crowning disaster of the series.

Events like those which I have related are severely felt in the private circles which they directly affect. General Dix had exchanged a growing law business, which promised to be both lucrative and permanent, for the uncertainties of political life. On his retirement from office it became a serious question with him, not only how to maintain his family, but how to employ energies which demanded an ample field for their exercise. The loss of his public position was regarded as a calamity in that household which had been forming gradually, and of which, thus far, I have made scarcely any mention. This seems the proper place in which to say a few words about that home in Albany which had become very dear to us, and about which there still shines a pleasant light, as I recall a very happy boyhood and dream myself back into those far-off days.

The city of Albany was at that time one of the most interesting towns in the State: the seat of our government; the home of a cultivated, genial, and polite society; the shrine of historical recollections. Something of the quaintness of old time still lingered in its precincts; there were traces even of the Dutch *régime* in its architecture, in the names of its citizens, and elsewhere. After living there some time one became perforce a loyal "Knickerbocker." I recollect more than one

house with the high gable broken, from eaves to peak, into steps, and displaying, in great iron letters fast anchored into the Holland brick, the venerable date of its construction; the wide porches at the doors, with seats on either side, where the citizens would spend the placid hour of twilight; the words in our vocabulary at whose odd, outlandish sound some of our friends from abroad were wont to smile. As for the society, it could hardly have been more agreeable; there was neither formalism nor ostentation, nor yet oppressive ceremony; people were easy-going, friendly, hospitable. The names of the Van Rensselaers and Gansevoorts, the Bleeckers and Ten Eyeks, the Paiges, Wheatons, and Rathbones, the Pruyns and Cornings, the Blanchards and Stantons, the Townsends and Forsyths, indicate the tone of the place. Governor Marcy's family was one of the most delightful of the city. In literary circles Dr. Beck was conspicuous; Dr. James McNaughton, our "beloved physician," adorned the medical profession; and prominent among the clergy were Dr. Horatio Potter, Rector of St. Peter's Church; Dr. Sprague, the eminent Presbyterian pastor; and Dr. Welsh, one of the lights of the Baptist denomination.

My father, after residing a while in Hawk Street and Elk Street, had finally fixed his domicile in Washington Street, now called Washington Avenue. The family then consisted of four children. I, the eldest, was born in New York, in 1827; my brother Baldwin, at Cooperstown, November 28, 1829; another brother, John Wilkins, and my eldest sister, Elizabeth Morgan, were added to the number in Albany. We were a happy and united family of young folks, knit together in love, and blessed with the care of God-fearing parents, who watched our progress with conscientious thought, and did their duty by us. My father always interested himself in our studies; he examined us at home on what we had done at school; to him we went, with confidence, for help, whenever we happened to stick fast on a tough scrap of Latin or hard sum in arithmetic; and many were the even-

ings when, laying aside his work, he would turn affectionately to his little lads and pull them through the rough places, showing them what they had overlooked, or explaining what they did not understand. Music was a part of our education; its sound was always heard in the house; both our parents played the piano with taste and sang agreeably. I do not know which of them I loved most to listen to. The echo of the old songs rings on still within my soul, and will do so till the end.

Our house was of great size, with a wide entrance-hall and large rooms. There was a fine shrubbery between it and the street; on either side and in the rear was a garden, with grass-plats, flowers, and fruit-trees. We had dogs, with classical names, one of which, a Spanish pointer, bore on his collar the words

"Et trux cum Lælape THERON."

We had ponies to ride, and rabbits; and there was a long wood-house, wherein we learned to be good pistol-shots and marksmen with the bow; and in the bitter winters we built snow forts at the bottom of the garden, and had battles *à boulet blanc*. In the summer-time my father used to take us to a little island opposite the city, where he taught us to swim; and in the winter we went to the river sometimes to learn to skate, and sometimes for a drive on the smooth, shining ice between our own home and the rival city of Troy.

The house was never without guests; usually some members of the family, either from the New England States, or New York, or Canada, were there; hospitality was the law of the establishment. We went occasionally to New York, to see our grandparents; our summers we spent, as happy as children could be, at Mr. Morgan's favorite farm-house in Brookfield, Madison County, which was known as "the Unadilla." As children we were deeply impressed by what we considered the stately splendors of the New York residence, 14 Bond Street. It was one of a row of white marble houses, once known as "the Bond Street Palaces;" and if one would have a striking

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proof of the mutations of this world, and the change in our standard of magnificence, let him go and look at the poor shadow of the past, as it stands there defaced by tradesmen's signs and patient under a series of profanities, and try to realize that it could ever have been called "a palace."

My father's interest in our education, together with his reluctance to send us into the thick of a miscellaneous herd of boys, induced him to try and secure for us the benefits of more select and private instruction. One day there came to Albany an Englishman named William H. Duff, once in the British army. His wife was remarkable for personal beauty and refinement of manners. They were in quest of the means of a livelihood, and it resulted in their opening a little school, to which my father sent us. There were some two dozen boys there of the best families in Albany. We were taught Latin and English, drawing, fencing, and military exercise. Old-fashioned drilling in Latin was the foundation of everything else, and to this department my father was particularly attentive in his habitual examination of our progress. After some time the school broke up, and we were sent to the Pearl Street Academy, a much larger establishment. My father never lost his interest in Major Duff. Years afterward, when the war with Mexico came on, he got him a commission in one of the new regiments of dragoons raised for that service. Major Duff went to the field, but never came back; his bones still lie there in the land of the stranger, with those of other gallant men who perished of disease or fell in battle.

St. Peter's was the parish church; the Rev. Dr. Horatio Potter our devoted pastor. He has since completed twenty-five years in the Episcopate, illustrating the virtues which form the apostolic description of a bishop. As to the old church, it was simply and merely frightful in an architectural point of view, though it dated from Colonial times, and had the arms of good Queen Anne on its communion plate. No such arrangement of chancel was ever heard of, to the best of my belief, before or since. What seemed to be two squarish tubs

of mahogany, with fronts shaped like the dash-board of a sleigh, projected from the wall, precisely alike in shape and size; their farther advance upon the congregation was restrained by a stout rail, which kept them in and left room in the midst for a "communion-table;" in these alternately the service was read and the sermon preached. We had a large, square pew in the north-west corner, with a table for books; and there the whole family could be seen in their place as regularly as the Lord's-day came round. At home my father read the household prayers; at church he was always present; the Rector was ever our honored guest. The faithful pastor had the love and confidence of his flock, and their sympathy in many domestic afflictions; he went quietly and steadily on the round of duty, little disturbed by the chances and changes of this mortal life.

Some time in those years Lord Morpeth came to Albany, and my father took him to St. Peter's. His lordship, apparently pleased with what he had heard, remarked to my father as they left the church together, "Ah! they do the music nicely!" This critical observation enchanted my father, who often told the story, with a hearty laugh at the civility of the appreciative peer.

Thus we passed the years from 1830 to 1842, when the home was broken up, and a period of wandering began. A hundred recollections of those days come back, with anecdotes and reminiscences innumerable; and, if this were a monograph covering that period only, I might fill a fair-sized pamphlet with them. But I pass on, merely adding that we grew to love Albany as a sweet home, and looked back to it through the unsettled years that followed as persons who have lost some good thing. Nor did that feeling ever die away. When, in the year 1873, my parents returned thither upon the General's election as Governor, it was to no strange city, but to a familiar scene; and they were welcomed by kind friends who still remained, or by the inheritors of the names and traditions of the past, and lovingly greeted as persons

who come once more to their own, and find their own faithful and true as of old.

Immediately after the fall election in 1838 Mr. Morgan received a letter from the President, urging him to induce General Dix to remain at Albany. Mr. Van Buren, still hopeful of his re-election, no doubt desired to have at the State capital some person possessing his full confidence, loyal to his administration, and ready to lend aid in the uncertain future, for the struggle for the Presidency was yet two years off. I give the correspondence:

"Washington, November 14, 1838.

"My dear Sir,—Will you excuse me for troubling you upon a point with which I have perhaps nothing to do? Our friend General Dix will, without doubt, fall a sacrifice to Whig vengeance. He is too honest, too useful, and too proud to avoid it. What is he to do with himself until the people recall him into their service? You know the anxiety our friends feel to retain him at Albany, which has been the theatre of his usefulness, and where he established for himself a reputation which few men of his age have been able to arrive at. Would the sacrifice of his remaining there a few years without the certainty of public employment be too great for the occasion? You are a better judge of the whole matter than I can possibly be, and will, I doubt not, advise him for the best. It is my knowledge of the respect he so properly entertains for your opinion, and the hope that it may be favorable, which have tempted me to hazard the step I have taken in directing your attention to the subject.

"Our reverses in New York have indeed been severe, but with courage and constancy they may not only be overcome, but converted to our future and permanent advantage.

"Remember me kindly to Mrs. Morgan, and believe me to be very truly yours, M. Van Buren.

"John J. Morgan, Esq."

To this Mr. Morgan replied:

"New York, November 20, 1838.

"My dear Sir,—Mr. Dix happened to be in New York on official business when I received your letter of the 14th inst. He expects, of course, the visitation of Whig vengeance, and had made up his mind to return to Cooperstown, and to occupy himself with the education of his

children and such business connected with his profession as might be committed to him, and by country air and exercise to repair the inroads made upon his health by the severe labors and close confinement to which he has been subjected by his present office. Your wish in respect to his residence in Albany was the subject of our conversation while he remained with us. We are fully sensible how necessary it is that some one who took an active part in all the measures of the administration at Albany, and who is capable of defending them, should remain there; but, without him, are there not there those who are eminently so qualified? The difficulty with him, and in respect to a continued residence in Albany, is, that he will be without sufficient employment, and that, to a man of his turn of mind and active habits, would be very distressing. Still, the expression of a wish from you in the matter is sufficient to make us pause. At all events he will not leave Albany till the latter part of April, and by that time he may be better able to decide upon his course. The victory over us here is a commercial victory, and I have not a doubt that our loss in this State will greatly contribute to our gain elsewhere, and will only the more certainly secure our final success in this great struggle. You boldly brought before the people the question on which I think their freedom depends; you knew the hazards to which it would subject your popularity, and that many of those who called themselves your friends would desert you, and that possibly even your native State might for a while abandon you; but you knew the people, and you knew that they would finally and in good season determine to govern themselves, and not be governed by merchants, banks, and speculators. Very sincerely yours,

"JOHN J. MORGAN."

In sending a copy of this correspondence to my mother Mr. Morgan generously removed one of the obstacles in the way of a continued residence at the capital, as shown in the following lines:

"Mr. Dix must not be deterred from doing what he wishes on account of pecuniary calculations. We, and I say emphatically *we*, can afford to be above them, when consistency of character, health, or real comfort requires it."

It was then decided that General Dix should remain at Albany. The President earnestly desired it; and Mr. Morgan again proved his devoted friend, by averting the inconvenience of the loss of salary at a time when his income from

other sources was very small. I have a special reason for mentioning these facts, which will appear hereafter, and justify this introduction of personal details at this point of the narrative.

Whatever may have been the political hopes entertained by the friends of Mr. Van Buren, they were destined to bitter disappointment. In the summer of 1839 he made a tour of the State of New York, but without the substantial results which were anticipated—the fates had pronounced against him. The following year brought on the "battle royal," which resulted in the total rout of the administration. I shall never forget the oddities and whimsicalities of the day, wisely encouraged and stimulated by the shrewd leaders of the opposition. It was known as the "*Log Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign.*" All over the land rude huts were erected, and cider was on draught, flowing freely; and, what with these novelties and the halo of military renown encircling the head of General William Henry Harrison, the impulse toward a change proved irresistible. This appears to be the first time in our history in which a direct appeal was made to the lower classes by exciting their curiosity, feeding the desire for amusement, and presenting what is low and vulgar as an inducement for support. Since that day the thing has been carried farther, until it is actually a disadvantage to be of good stock and to have inherited "the grand old name of gentleman." Then began the passion for titles betokening humble antecedents—the procession of "Mill Boys," "Rail-splitters," "Shoemakers," "Canal-boat Drivers," then first set forth upon the stage of American politics—till now, if a candidate be so unfortunate as to have had illustrious ancestors, it behooves him in his own interests to hush the matter up. In the midst of these attractions—contemptible in themselves, but formidable as engines of influence—paltry, one-story shanties, with live raccoons crawling about them, and strings of pumpkin drying on the roof; barrels duly labelled with titles appetizing to the thirsty throats of the "great unwashed;"

medals with the effigies of epauletted chieftains, neckties woven of motley hues, and other like toys, gravely presented to the eager populace—and with campaign songs setting forth the power and prestige of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too," and announcing the conviction that "little Van was a used-up man," the autumnal days wore away; and hot strife grew among us school-boys of the period, and I and my brothers stood valiantly up, as became us, for the powers that were, while yet we secretly admired and horribly envied the seductive paraphernalia which the boys of Whig families flaunted in our faces, and by means whereof they embittered our existence. When at length things came to the supreme test of the ballot-box, and when the blow fell and the worst had arrived, and it could no longer be concealed that General Harrison, rich already in logs, and cabins, and raccoons, and kegs, and cider more or less hard, and flags, and guns, and Indian scalps, had the Presidency also, there was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth among us juveniles, quite as sincere, though not so permanent, as that to which our elders might have given way.

It came over our house as a great disaster. The home seemed likely to be broken up by the political revolution. There was no longer an object such as that which had induced my father, at the earnest instance of President Van Buren, to remain in Albany. He was at a loss what to do; the date at which to re-enter public life seemed indefinitely remote: again he thought of resuming his profession and bidding politics a long farewell. My mother wrote:

"We are cast down to earth, *politically* . . . the world is all before us again; and where to choose a resting-place is now the question to be decided. One day it is thought best to go down the river, the next to go far beyond it, and sometimes fancy wings her way across the sea, and we imagine ourselves *settled* (!) in Italy—but this is too foreign a flight to please me, although I shall not oppose any arrangement that wiser heads than mine may think it advisable to adopt. My

husband goes to Boston in a few days to deliver a *lecture*, not a *stump speech;* and as he stops in New York on his way he and papa will doubtless come to some sage determination."

The letter from which I have just quoted rustles with indignation against the fickle and inconstant people, of whose "virtue" and "intelligence" my mother appears at that moment to have entertained a contemptible opinion. The General, however, adds a re-assuring postscript in their vindication, from Boston (November 26, 1840), saying:

"My confidence in the 'virtue and intelligence of the people' is unshaken. They have been deceived; but I await the 'sober *second* thought,' and even the *third*, if necessary."

But his own sober second thought was that it was best to remain where he was; he felt, no doubt, that his career as a public man was not yet finished; he had, perhaps, the intuition of future successes.

What the address or lecture was which he went to Boston to deliver I do not know, and have not been at the pains to find out; but there is a point in connection with it too good to be lost. Writing to his brother, Captain Roger S. Dix, of the army, after his return, December 13, 1840, and referring to what he had been told—that the newspapers in Boston, with one exception, had spoken well of it—he says:

"I wish to know what paper is referred to as an exception, and what it said. I desire to know for my own benefit. Nothing does a man so much good as honest criticism, however severe it may be. I can truly say I have never been anxious to hunt up compliments, when I have been told that they have been paid to me. But fault-finding criticisms I am always desirous of seeing, because they often furnish hints which may be turned to good account. As I have been of late, and shall probably be hereafter, somewhat engaged in public speaking, I wish to know what my faults are, that I may correct them if I can."

Thus thrown out of public life, General Dix directed his attention to a new pursuit. Desiring to add something to

his income, and to find a proper field for his versatile genius and indefatigable activity in useful and congenial occupation, he resolved to adopt the profession of editor. It was determined to establish a journal of a literary and scientific character; of this he was to have the immediate supervision, while gentlemen conspicuous in various professions were to aid in the editorial work. The name selected was *The Northern Light;* and with General Dix there were associated Dr. T. Romeyn Beck, author of a treatise on Medical Jurisprudence, which was regarded as a standard work in Europe as well as in this country; Gideon Hawley, Secretary to the Board of Regents of the University; Amos Dean, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in the Albany Medical College; Thomas W. Olcott, President of the Mechanics' and Farmers' Bank, in Albany; and Edward C. Delevan, who was for many years at the head of the temperance movement in the United States. It seems that the object had in view was at first misunderstood. An unkindly notice of it appeared in the columns of the New York *Evening Express*, which gave General Dix the opportunity of defining its character in a communication to the editor of that newspaper. He says:

"The notice is founded upon so entire a misapprehension of the design of *The Northern Light*, that I deem it due to the proprietors and the gentlemen associated with me in conducting it to state its true nature and objects; and I do not doubt that you will with pleasure give the statement to your readers, and thus correct the erroneous impression which you have, I am sure unintentionally, created. The purposes for which *The Northern Light* was established were to disseminate useful knowledge, more particularly in respect to facts applicable to the practical business of life, and to open to free discussion a single branch of political science—political economy, including the tariff and the policy of protecting duties. I consented to take charge of the publication, with the assistance of five other gentlemen, whose names are given in the prospectus, and with the distinct and express understanding that its columns were to be kept free from all partisan discussions. The gentlemen referred to would not have been concerned in the publication but upon the condition of abstaining from party politics. Several of them have been uniformly opposed to the political party with which I have always

been connected. They believed with myself and the proprietors of *The Northern Light* that, after a long and angry political contest, a portion of the public attention might be turned, with pleasure and profit, to the discussion of less exciting topics than those which entered into the recent election, and that among the literary and scientific publications in which the country abounds a place might be found for theirs. The topics referred to, for the most part of practical usefulness, will be presented in a popular shape, and made intelligible to all classes of readers. The only source of anxiety to the members of the association is a distrust of their ability to render the enterprise in its execution worthy of the design. Among those who know us we are sure no apprehension will be felt as to a scrupulous adherence on our part to the avowed purposes of the publication. Those who are not personally acquainted with us will, it is believed, feel equally at ease on this point, when it is considered that we belong to different political parties, and that we have all an equal voice in deciding questions concerning the management of the editorial department. I will only add that if you, or any of your friends, will do us the favor to prepare a paper on any subject embraced in our prospectus, it will afford us the greatest pleasure to insert it."

The first number of *The Northern Light* appeared in April, 1841: the last that I can find is that of July, 1843. Its literary excellence may be inferred from the fact that among its contributors were Professor Alonzo Potter, of Union College, afterward Bishop of Pennsylvania; J. R. Poinsett, Minister to Mexico, and Secretary of War, under Mr. Van Buren; the Rev. William Croswell, D.D.; Thomas Cole, the painter; Miss Sedgwick; Edwin Croswell; J. Louis Tellkampf, Professor of German in Columbia College; Noah Webster; Matthew Henry Webster; Professor Charles W. Hackley; Alfred B. Street; Amos Dean; Samuel S. Randall, the biographer of Thomas Jefferson; the Rev. Horatio Potter, now Bishop of New York; John L. O'Sullivan; Horace B. Webster; Salem Town; James E. Freeman, the painter; Gerritt Smith; Willis Gaylord; James Hall, geologist in the State Survey; William H. Jansen; Drs. E. B. O'Callaghan, Heman J. Redfield, and Caleb Lyon, of Lyonsdale. In addition to these the five gentlemen whose names appear on the prospectus were occasional contributors. General Dix, besides

having the editorial management, wrote a series of articles on the English poets, beginning with Sir Henry Wotton, Edmund Spenser, and Ben Jonson, and also treated, in his usual luminous and scholarly manner, of many other subjects, among which were the Corn-laws in England and France, the state of the laboring population of Ireland, the temperature of the earth and meteorological phenomena, the organic chemistry of agriculture and physiology, and the charms of rural life, giving occasional translations of romances and tales from the French language.

Among the letters of that period is one from Henry James Anderson, a very intimate friend, and one of the most charming and accomplished gentlemen of his day. General Dix held him in the highest possible regard, not only for his scientific attainments and the purity and nobility of his character, but also for the peculiar raciness and delicate wit which rendered his society so agreeable. It appears that he had applied to Dr. Anderson for a contribution to *The Northern Light;* this is the answer which he received:

"New York, December 18, 1841.

"Dear Sir,—Your notice that you held on account of *The Northern Light* a post-note of mine promising 'an article' to that journal, came duly to hand, and is hereby acknowledged.

"As I keep no bill-book I am unable to refer to anything better than my memory for the date and maturity of 'said' post-note. It seems to me that it ran in this way: 'I do *not* promise to write an article for *The Northern Light*, either for a day certain or uncertain, near or remote.' I thought I was safe and had contracted no debt, but now I find that I had 'put out paper,' and must make arrangements to redeem. I certainly did not intend to 'create stock;' but if I have, as it has not yet passed into the hands of innocent third parties, I feel strongly inclined to 'repudiate.'

"Since I sent you my non-promissory note I have entered into positive engagements with a publisher to deliver a certain quantity of 'copy' in a given time. This is my first departure from the cash system—my first step in the downward path of debt. I am already seized with the horrors of remorse, and I dare say I shall pay for my folly by seeing myself gazetted as a bankrupt under the new act.

"In the name of humanity do look again at that no-bond of mine and see if I am 'liable,' under the strictest letter of the law-merchant, or even under the sharpest interpretation of the law-moral. I feel quite distressed by this unexpected addition to my obligations; and yet, if you can convince my 'conscientiousness'—a bump which is not wanting in size—I will pay you, or order, in the shortest time and best paper I can command.

"We have just organized here a little band of 'Brothers,' as we call ourselves. We are 'free-trade-mad,' and propose to dine together at Blancard's every fortnight or week, perhaps, on beefsteak and oysters, with wine on the voluntary principle, and rejoice in the wisdom which we shall utter on the occasion. Our first meeting is this evening, at five.

"I cannot close without my heartfelt congratulations on the result of the elections. And happy I am that you, among the first I loved for their devotedness to Truth and Right, have held, through either fortune, unfalteringly to the course which the appeal to the people's sober thought has so gloriously vindicated.

"Truly yours, HENRY JAS. ANDERSON."

The General's editorial labors were soon interrupted. In the year 1841 he was recalled to public life by election as member of Assembly. The event caused a sensation at the house on Washington Street. The General was absent from the city at the time. One evening, as my mother was sitting quietly in her room, Mr. John Van Buren, with two or three friends, rushed in and told her that she must make haste and shut all the doors, as a vast body of the unterrified Democracy, wild with enthusiasm, and flaring with torches and banners, was moving up toward the house to congratulate the General on his election. Measures having been rapidly taken for defence from the embraces of the delighted crowd, Mr. Van Buren met them at the entrance of the grounds, and, mounted on a chair, addressed them in that characteristic style which made him one of the most popular of public speakers. They accepted the apology thus rendered for the absence of the object of their quest, and, after the usual uproar of cheers and shouts, relieved the household of apprehension and boisterously withdrew.

General Dix's election gave gratification in many quarters.

I select one from a large number of similar letters addressed to him at that time. It is from General Borland:

"Montgomery, November 17, 1841.

"*General John A. Dix:*

"DEAR SIR,—In view of the recent triumphs of Democracy I cannot withhold an expression of my high gratification.

"And will you allow me to say (for so I verily believe) that no single event, in the whole range of Democratic success, has been more grateful to my feelings, or more important to the great cause of liberal principles, than your own election.

"For years past we have, as a party, too much neglected moral worth, integrity of character, sound sense, and high literary attainments.

"Your success will, I trust, induce our friends thoughout the State hereafter to look more for your likeness than they have for years past.

"My friend Mr. Hill* having afforded a favorable opportunity, in justice to my own feelings I could not but embrace it, to give you a faint expression of the high regard I entertain for your character.

"Yours cordially, etc., CHARLES BORLAND."

The following year brought with it a terrible anxiety, ending in the breaking up of our home, amid sorrowful forebodings and tearful separations. The life at Albany abruptly ended, and we went forth, to return to it, as a household, no more.

My mother's health, which had not been strong, became so seriously impaired, that her medical advisers advised a removal to a milder climate for the winter. The urgency being great, preparations for departure were hurriedly made. After much consultation and inquiry the island of Madeira was selected as the best place in which to pass the ensuing months. Access to it was not easy; but it happened that a small ship bound for Funchal was then lying in the port of New York. In that vessel, the *Mexican*, 300 tons, Captain Deming, my parents, with three of their children, embarked on the 16th of October and for the second time took their way across the sea.

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* The Hon. N. P. Hill.

V.

ABSENCE FROM HOME.

MADEIRA.–SPAIN.–ITALY.

A.D. 1842–1844.

Voyage to Madeira. — Funchal. — Passage to Cadiz. — Seville. — Holy Week. — Murillo's Paintings. — Gibraltar. — Spanish Coast. — Florence. — The Villa d'Elci. — Rome. — France. — Navigation of the Loire. — Havre Packet-ship.

V.

There is a little volume, of 377 pages, 12mo, which may occasionally be picked up in those shops in which they deal in rare books. It is entitled "A Winter in Madeira, and a Summer in Spain and Florence." It was written by my father some time after his return from this second journey to Europe, and contains a narrative of one of the most interesting and happy years of his life. Agreeably written, and illustrated by a few woodcuts, rather coarsely executed, from some of my own pencil sketches, it gives an account of our voyage from New York to Madeira, of the heavy gale encountered on the way, of our passage through the Azores, and of our arrival, on the 11th of November, at the exquisitely beautiful island which was to form our winter home. Guided by that little volume, the reader may pass from scene to scene amid the superb mountains and dizzy ravines, and become familiar with the manners and customs of the simple and industrious peasantry of that dependency of the Portuguese crown. If he have a taste for them he may revel in statistics concerning climate and productions, commerce and trade, agriculture, government, and religion. He will see us in our pleasant apartments near the Carreira, under the charge of our merry Portuguese landlord, Gambaro Baxixa. He may read the exploits of Don Miguel, and sigh over the romance of Robert Machin and Anne D'Arfet. It was a winter's idyl, a grateful time of rest and refreshment, in one of the most delicious climates in the world, where an invalid is hardly ever kept in-doors by rain, where the sun is rarely too warm for open-air exercise, and where a light overcoat suffices for the coolest day; where one can go only on horseback or on foot, and where each path

leads to some grand specimen of the works of the Almighty, such as volcanic regions alone exhibit in perfection; where the roads are often bordered by hedges of heliotrope higher than the tallest man's head, and the vine spreads her clusters to the noonday, and the century-plant shoots up, with her candelabra of white blossoms, all but unnoticed amid the bloom of the landscape. If anything were needed to enhance the thorough enjoyment of that happy winter, it was supplied in my mother's perfect recovery of her health, and in the birth of another beloved daughter of our house. How full of enjoyment were those months to one tired out by hard work, and long tossed on the waves of New York politics, may be discovered in the General's graphic account of that winter of 1842–'43.

From the book referred to — which, by-the-bye, went through five editions, though now almost forgotten—I take the account of our departure from the beautiful island, and the memorable passage to Cadiz. He says:

"On the 17th of March we bade adieu to Madeira, and with the most sincere regret. The winter had not passed away without bringing with it some inconveniences and trials; but these were far over-balanced by the mildness of the atmosphere in which we lived, and the beauties of the scenery by which we were surrounded.

"It was about four in the afternoon when we left the beach to embark in the little brig which was to convey us to the European continent. In an hour more we were sailing slowly out of the roadstead. The sun shone with unusual splendor, and as he sunk down in the west, casting heavy shadows across the ravines back of the city, and bathing the tops of the mountains in golden light, the scene was scarcely less beautiful in our eyes, familiar as it had become, than when it first broke upon our sight. During the night we passed the Desertas near enough to make out their harsh, ragged outlines in the moonlight. At dawn the next day they were far in the distance, faintly relieved by the shadowy form of Madeira in

the background. In a few hours more they had all disappeared, and nothing remained to bound the sight but an unbroken horizon of sky and waves.

"The passage from Madeira to Cadiz, the port to which we were destined, averages six or seven days. The vessel in which we had embarked was a small one, not measuring more than 170 tons, but she was strong, skilfully commanded, and had a crew of fine young men. She was from the city of Boston, and bore its name. She had for eight years baffled the fogs and north-easters which preside over the New England coast, and there was a guarantee in this that she would do her duty in case of need. Her cabin was small; but having discharged her cargo at Funchal, and being in ballast, a roomy apartment was fitted up in her hold, and a neat and delightful one it was, of clean, freshly planed but unpainted boards, far outdoing the principal cabin in convenience and comfort. It had got the name of the steerage while the carpenter was fitting it up, but it soon sunk this cognomen in the more appropriate one of the gentlemen's cabin. The passengers were seventeen in number, including ladies, gentlemen, children, and servants, and, with the crew added, we mustered twenty-six souls. The wind was fair, the skies serene, and the moon was in her third quarter, giving us fine bright nights. Time never hangs heavily at sea under such circumstances. Even sea-sickness loses half its horrors when you know that you are speeding on to your destination, and that your sufferings will soon be at an end. For two days and nights the wind blew steadily, but was constantly though almost imperceptibly increasing. From five and six knots an hour our log began to report seven and eight, and at last nine and ten; the sky became overcast, the rain came down at intervals in torrents, without any abatement of the wind, and a dense fog set in on the morning of the fourth day, just at dawn, when we were indulging the hope of seeing land. Our situation was now extremely unpleasant. The wind blew violently — so much so that the courses were taken in, and the vessel was running under

close-reefed top-sails—and we were on a lee-shore, in a thick fog. The captain had never been at Cadiz, but he had been up all night studying an excellent chart, which he had found at Funchal, and had made himself as familiar with the coast and harbor as though he had navigated them all his life. At nine in the morning he told a few of us that he should be opposite the light-house in an hour, if his reckoning was right, and he must then choose between the alternatives of standing in or of attempting to beat out to sea. The latter would have been full of peril, for if the wind had continued to increase, as in fact it did, we should in all probability have gone ashore before night. The captain at half-past nine took his station in the foretop, and in half an hour more stood boldly in for the land. To those of us who understood the matter the next half-hour was a period of extreme anxiety. But it was hardly over before the captain's clear voice was heard, amid the roaring of the storm, giving his orders to the helmsman with as much confidence as if he had been on his own native coast. He had descried the light-house at a distance of about half a mile—the first object we had seen, excepting a few vessels which crossed our path, since we lost sight of the Desertas. He was now at home. He had so thoroughly mastered his chart that he knew the bearings of all the shoals and breakers which lie at the mouth of the harbor from the light-house, and he remained in the foretop until we had passed them all, directing the motions of the vessel with perfect calmness and confidence. It was certainly no small triumph of nautical skill on the part of our Yankee captain. He had sailed nearly six hundred miles, and had hit the light-house at the mouth of the harbor to which he was destined within fifteen minutes after his reckoning was up. It must be confessed, too, that there was some good-luck in it. But his subsequent management of the vessel, steering her through breakers and reefs of rocks without the aid of a pilot, was all skill and good judgment."

It would be difficult to speak too warmly of the pleasure

derived from our glimpse of Spain. Landing at the white-walled Cadiz, we spent some days enjoying the novel sights of that city; now strolling about the streets, where the beautiful, dark-eyed women, with their mantillas about their jet-black hair, flitted gracefully to and fro, and often stopped to admire and kiss our bright, curly-headed Charley, as though he were an angel in the midst of the brunette monotony; now penetrating into the faintly perfumed chapel of some religious house in quest of notable pictures; now looking at the port, filled with ships of manifold rigs, among which plied the boats of the deft Spanish oarsmen. And then one day we took the steamer, and, having crossed to the other side of the bay, went up the Guadalquiver, following its numberless turns and bends, till we saw the Golden Tower of Seville in the distance, and the vast pile of the Cathedral, with its crested Giralda, looming over the orange groves. In that city we spent several days, including the Holy Week; and we looked with wonder on the processions and pageants, which recalled the mediæval Mysteries, as angels and archangels, saints and martyrs, Virgins and doctors swept by, mounted on great cars drawn by handsome horses, and escorted by thousands of troops of the line, whose military bands filled the air with music. And at the dead of night we listened to the big bell of the Cathedral, whose tone, like low thunder, is heard but two or three times in the year, when Holy Church is keeping up the memory of some great act in the suffering life of the Redeemer of men. We heard them sing the *Miserere* in the Cathedral, and High Mass on Easter; and then we went to see the bull fights at the amphitheatre, which holds 20,000 spectators. But that which gave us most joy was the sight of the treasures of art in that shrine of Spanish painting—the works of Valdes, Zurbaran, Velasquez, and Roelas, and the solemn splendors of the Carmen, where the canvases of Murillo display the histories of the old and new dispensations, and seem themselves like miracles of religious devotion and technical skill. I remember noth-

ing more impressive since that day; nor shall I ever again enjoy such sensations as those awakened by the sight of that lordly wealth, unrivalled save in Venice, and breathing of the very awe and majesty of religion; for surely, if there be religion in art, it is to be seen at its height in the work of the Spanish School.

From these glories we turned reluctantly away, and, descending the river, went back to Cadiz; and thence by steamer to Gibraltar, where we saw the Union Jack flying in the breeze, and the red-coated sentries pacing the rocky platform, and heard the beat of the British drums and the shrill music of the fife; and walked through the galleries in the rock, and drove across the Neutral Ground to get a distant view of the great lion-like rampart of the Straits. A Spanish steamer then took us up and carried us along the coast. Every day we landed at some new town: at Malaga, Almeria, and Aguilas; at Cartagena, Alicante, and Valencia; at Barcelona, on which the guns frowned from Monjuich; and so along the Mediterranean to Leghorn, and then to Pisa and Florence. It was a journey to be long remembered, standing clearly on the horizon of the far-away.

The General spent the summer of 1843 in a villa outside the walls of Florence. It belonged to the Marquis d'Elci, and had all the requisites for one of Mrs. Henry Wood's romances. It was quadrangular, enclosing a paved court: three sides of the structure constituted the residence, while the fourth was a thick wall, pierced by a great gate, and broad enough for a passage-way along the top from wing to wing. There were suites of rooms enough for half a dozen families; and an immense hall, which we called the ball-room. The floors above and below were of brick, and the sleeping apartments had great high-post bedsteads, with awful hangings; and on the walls hung full-length pictures of nobles, soldiers, priests, and nuns. Then there was a chapel, in which from time to time Mass was sung; and once during the summer the peasantry came thither to keep a *fête*, and the floor was

made into a rich mosaic of many-colored leaves of roses and other flowers, and it was a great gala of costumes, banners, incense, and song. I had a room, or rather a suite of rooms, in the upper story; from the windows I could trace the windings of the Arno down the rich valley between dark-blue hills; and I remember how, when the moon was setting, and a little owl would come and sit over my window and cry in doleful tone, I used to wish myself anywhere else, and did not like the look of the tall pictures surveying me in the dim light, nor the rustle of the tapestries about the bed. In the end of the summer a dear friend of my mother's died there, in the apartment adjoining mine. She was the daughter of Captain James Lawrence, who fell fighting his ship, the *Chesapeake*, against the British frigate *Shannon*. Mary Lawrence was with my mother at Miss Désabaye's school in New York. She afterward married Mr. William Preston Griffin, of the Navy. We met them on the way to Italy, and persuaded them to go with us to Florence for the summer. She died in child-bed at the villa, September 3. It was like the falling of a sudden night about our path. After that I went to another part of the villa, for the associations of that side of the court-yard were too painful to be borne. Indeed, the rumor was that the English doctor had brought her death about by bad treatment; and it was whispered among the *contadine* that "the American signora who was murdered at the Villa d'Elci walked at night."

Tuscany was then a grand-dukedom; Leopold II. its mild and popular ruler. The summer residence was close by us. We often met the Grand-duke taking his afternoon walk, with his wife and children, under the cypresses, or through the vine-bordered roads of the country, with no more state than any honest citizen.

Of all these things my father has written in the volume already referred to: of the Duomo and Giotto's tower, of the bridges and the Cascine, of Fiesole and the Apennines, of the manners of the people and their mode of life; of the chariot-

races in the ancient Roman style in the great Piazza on the eve of St. John's-day, and the festa and fireworks and races of barbs on St. Peter's-day, and the Haydn music at the Palazzo Vecchio.

From Florence we went to Rome, where we spent the following winter, that of 1843–'44. There is little worth noting in the domestic annals of those months; they passed quietly and happily, in the society of friends who, like ourselves, were far from home; in reading and study in connection with daily visits to the wonders of the old and new cities; and in attendance at the magnificent services at St. Peter's and other churches. We saw a great deal of the artists of that period, among whom was James E. Freeman, whose merit my father had discovered some years before, when they met at Albany, and in whose progress in his art he took a deep interest as long as he lived. Rome was then the Rome of the Pontiffs and of a past age; Gregory XVI. occupied the Papal throne; the era of radical change seemed far away. By the side of the yellow Tiber the city and its inhabitants dozed and dreamed; and no dreamy life was ever more delicious than that which they led who, in their wanderings, found themselves within the venerable walls. Twelve years afterward we were there again. Many changes had come; others were imminent; the French were holding the city and protecting the Supreme Pontiff from the storm outside. Since that day how wonderfully has everything changed! What is the Rome of 1881 to those who remember the Rome of 1843?

Leaving the Eternal City on the 26th of March, the General took us to Naples, where he distinguished himself by a foolhardy performance. Vesuvius was in partial eruption. We ascended the mountain to see what could be seen. The crater looked like a hollow bowl sunken about one hundred feet below the rocky ledges on which we stood; from side to side beneath stretched a smooth layer of hardened lava, hot enough to scorch the soles of the boots. In the centre of that plain was a cone, rising to the level of the sides of the mountain,

and having three or four apertures at the summit, out of which came fire, with showers of stones. As these were shot forth the cone shook to its base. The General insisted on descending into the crater, attended by one of the guides, whom he bade to lead on as far as he dared to go. The guide accordingly led him down, step by step, and rapidly, across the field and to the very foot of the cone, where he stopped, refusing to go farther. But the General, grasping his climbing-staff, mounted to the top of the cone, and actually poked his stick into one of the open vents—looking up, when red-hot stones flew out, to dodge them as they fell. He did not defend these proceedings in after-years, but agreed with us that they were preposterous. Still, they were characteristic of his coolness and love of adventure.

From Naples we went by steamer to Marseilles, and thence through France to Paris. The journey was, in some respects, very characteristic, our route being through Arles, Avignon, and Givors, and by Roanne and Cosne, on the river Loire, to Orleans. We travelled part of the way on a railroad which was one of the first constructed in the kingdom; and, as the engineers proceeded on the theory that, as a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, so the simplest way to build a railroad was to carry it straight along, no matter what stood in the way, this particular road, passing through a hilly country, was little better than an interminable succession of tunnels, connected by brief ventilation in the open air. On the river Loire we journeyed in a strange kind of steamer, of immense length, very narrow, and drawing very little water. The whole line had a common name—the *Inexplosibles*—numbered 1, 2, 3, etc. Whenever the *Inexplosible No.* 4, our noble craft, grounded on the shoals of the river—which happened every hour or so—the sailors jumped overboard—the water being not quite up to their knees—and shoved her along, to the delight of the voyagers.

In those days there was a justly celebrated line of Havre

packets, delightful ships, roomy and comfortable, with good captains and crews, and everything needed for the happiness of the passengers on their four weeks' voyage. We embarked in one of those ships, the *Iowa*, on May 8, 1844. To cross the Western Ocean was no light affair in those days. The traveller had a taste of real sea life; and the restless and excitable voyager of our time, whose highest ambition is to dash at break-neck speed from Navesink to Fastnet in seven days, is not altogether the enviable being he deems himself in contrast with the old-fashioned tourist. Though our innumerable and insatiate excursionists have gained in time, they have lost in other things: in the pleasure of quiet, dreamy days on shipboard, in delightful companionships, in some knowledge of the seaman's craft, and the subtler phenomena of wind and wave, sky and cloud, tides and currents, calm and storm. Each of those white-winged ships was a school, each voyage a course of study; and many and precious were the lessons learned during the four weeks spent at sea.

VI.

UNITED STATES SENATE.

A.D. 1845-1853.

New York Polities.—Barnburners and Hunkers.—Abolitionism.—Silas Wright.—Canvass of 1844.—1845: Elected Senator of the United States.—Annexation of Texas.—First Speech in the Senate, on the Oregon Question.—Speech on French Spoliations.—Speech on the Warehouse Bill.—Declines the Mission to England.—Speech on the Lieutenant-general Bill.—The War with Mexico.—Speech on the Three Million Bill.—Extension of Slavery.—Battle of Buena Vista.—Letters of Major R. S. Dix.—Speech on European Intervention.—Slavery in the Territories.—Anti-rentism in New York.—Defeat of Governor Wright.—His Death.—Political *Credo* of General Dix.—Free-soil Movement of 1848.—East Hampton.—Climate of Long Island.—Sporting.—Nomination for Governor.—Defeat of Free-soilers.—Last Speech in the Senate.—Port Chester.—Death of John J. Morgan.—Manursing Island.—1852: Death of Baldwin Dix.—Reunion of the Democratic Party.—Baltimore Convention.—Election of Franklin Pierce.—The Mission to France.

VI.

With the return from Europe came a change from tranquillity to confusion, from the quiet pleasures of foreign travel to the caldron of New York politics, then bubbling and seething more furiously than ever. The Democratic party, hard pushed by its enemies, was divided into sections, which grew daily more hostile in their attitude. To these schools the grotesque names of "Barnburners" and "Old Hunkers" were applied: they might have been more philosophically described as Radicals and Conservatives. Nearly equal in numbers, they differed on many points, and, first, on questions of finance and State government. The Barnburners were the party of strict economy; abhorring debt, they insisted that provision ought to be made for paying the interest on State loans by taxation before pledging the credit of the State; they were suspicious of banks, believed in hard-money, and adhered to the financial policy of President Van Buren. The Old Hunkers, on the other hand, appear to have held easier views on all these points; speculative, and ready to take risks, they were lax where the Barnburners were severe.* But now another

* A very high authority, in reply to an inquiry as to the origin of the names of those sections of the Democratic party, wrote to me as follows:

"My impression is that the factions known as Barnburners and Old Hunkers grew out of the early insinuations of the slavery question into general politics. The Old Hunkers were opposed to any discussion of the subject, as likely to destroy the harmony of "the party;" and the Barnburners were in favor of treating it like all other questions of public interest. The significance of the names, if I apprehend them rightly, was, that the one kept at home, or to their *hunk*, never knowing what was going on in the world; and that the other was willing to burn down the entire barn to get rid of a few rats."

question was troubling the camp, and threatening to make the family quarrel much more acrimonious. The problem of slavery had been forever settled, as was fondly supposed, by the "Missouri Compromise," in 1820; it was now re-opened, and in a way to become more complicated than before. For this certain persons, known as Abolitionists, were mainly responsible.

The views of the earliest Abolitionists were moderate compared with those of the men to whom that title became subsequently restricted. In time a division took place in the body, resulting in the formation of a radical Abolition party, including such men as Gerritt Smith and William Lloyd Garrison. These extremists were, theoretically, the first Secessionists: they resigned office under the government, and refused thereafter either to hold office, or even to vote; they regarded the Constitution of the United States as a compact with Satan, would have nothing to do with public affairs, and preferred a rupture of the Union to living under a system which tolerated slavery and protected slave-holders. The moderate Abolitionists stopped short of those extremes: they continued to vote, did not refuse office, and were known as the "Liberty party;" they nominated candidates of their own as such, and were not unwilling to work with any other party in the country, North or South, for the attainment of their ends. The distinction between the moderate and ultra Abolitionists is important. When I speak of "Abolitionists" hereafter I refer to those of the latter class, the followers of Garrison and Smith, and not to the "Liberty party," which supported James G. Birney for President in 1840 and 1844.

No one can justly blame the people of the South for their anxiety and indignation at the progress of the Abolition movement. Its ultimate aim was to overthrow that social compact under which the free and slave-holding States were united under a common Constitution, while the actual invasion of the right of the Southerner to his property was so flagrant as to lead him to demand redress for wrongs already

sustained and guarantees for the future. Out of all this it was inevitable that new issues must arise, with complicated and dangerous positions. The Democratic party recognized and respected the rights of the South under the Constitution of the United States; yet it was easy to see that questions might come up on which men, though all alike friendly to the South, would feel at a loss what to say, and might be driven to take opposite sides.

No figure of that era is more conspicuous than that of Silas Wright, Senator of the United States, and Governor of the State of New York. To those who form their ideal of the patriot by study of the classical models of ancient Rome he must be one of the most charming figures of our history—a true Cincinnatus; an image of pristine simplicity and integrity. Mr. Wright was one of my father's warmest friends, and the object of his sincere admiration and devoted attachment—a man after his own heart. A few words with reference to this great statesman and illustrious citizen.

Silas Wright was born at Amherst, Mass., in the year 1795, being three years my father's senior; he was brought up in Vermont, amid the green hills, and was graduated at Middlebury College in 1815. His family was a humble one, and it is even asserted that his father was without education. They were intense lovers of their country, and his father and one of his brothers were soldiers in the war of 1812. The son Silas received a literary training through the self-denial of his people, who desired to give that advantage to at least one of their house. In the year 1819 he settled in Canton, St. Lawrence County, in the State of New York, and began the practice of the law. There, subsequently, he married; thither he retreated from the cares of public life whenever a breathing-spell was given him; there, in the spring immediately succeeding his defeat when nominated a second time for Governor of the State of New York, he might have been seen driving his team afield and wiping the sweat from his brow, like a noble Roman of the sterling stamp; and there, Au-

gust 27, 1847, he resigned his soul to God, leaving no blot on his name, and mourned in silence by men who hardly knew till then what manner of person it was whom the land had lost.

Mr. Wright's political career began about the year 1820; in 1827 he was sent to Congress. His popularity among his towns-people was immense; his success was striking. An opponent of Governor Clinton, and a supporter of Mr. Crawford for the Presidency, he espoused the cause of General Jackson in the year 1828, and thereupon became associated with Mr. Van Buren and my father in the political movements in which they were engaged subsequently to that date. Having ably filled the office of Comptroller of the State from 1829 to 1832, he was elected, with little or no opposition, to the United States Senate, and took his seat there January 14, 1833. It may be truly said that "there were giants in the earth in those days." A writer, speaking of the statesmen among whom Mr. Wright was thus called to take his place, and with whom he contended for the honors acquired in his Senatorial career, enumerates—

". . . The gallant and chivalrous Clay, captivating the heart and enchaining the imagination by the magic bursts of his thrilling eloquence; Calhoun, the fearless champion of the sovereignty of the States, with his chaste diction and analytical mind, every sentence that he uttered a whole chapter of argument, and every word a political text; Webster, calm, profound, and argumentative, powerful in stature and gigantic in mind; the smooth and plausible Clayton; and Preston, fervid and impassioned as the rays of the Southern sun which had warmed his genius into life. On the opposite side there was Benton, industrious, determined, and unyielding, with his pockets overflowing with statistics, and his head full of historical lore; Forsyth, easy and graceful in his address, but an able and experienced debater; Rives, the eloquent and talented Senator from the Old Dominion, seeking to give vent to the inspiration he had caught in the groves of Monticello;

White, with his metaphysical and sententious apophthegms; and the shrewd and cautious Grundy, familiar with parliamentary tactics, watching for the weak points in his adversary's argument, and never caring to conceal his gratification when he saw the fabric reared with so much labor toppling down in the dust."*

Mr. Wright made a brilliant name for himself in the Senate, and became one of its most influential members. He supported the financial policy of President Van Buren; and when petitions came praying for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and other parts subject to the direct control of the general government, he voted either to refuse to receive them or to lay them on the table. He was no abolitionist, in the technical sense in which the word was used in the political debates of the time; still, like the old-fashioned Democrats of that day, he regarded slavery as a terrible evil, desired its suppression by just and lawful means, and confidently expected its ultimate extinction. But he respected the guarantees of the Constitution, and declined to have part or lot in the proceedings of those enthusiasts who were stirring up the community and evoking the spirits of disunion and civil war. In these views my father and he were one.

Early in the year 1844 a movement was begun to nominate Senator Wright for the office of Governor of this State. It is well known that it was most distasteful to him, and that he did his utmost to prevent it. If evidence on that point were needed it might be supplied by quotations from his letters to General Dix during the summer of that year. He was happy and contented in his place in the Senate; he dreaded the change to the turmoil at Albany. No man knew better than he how serious were the divisions in the Democratic party; and although, up to that time, the section known as the

* "Lives of the Governors of the State of New York," by John S. Jenkins, pp. 758, 759.

Hunkers had not declared war against him, yet there was no sympathy between them and a man who regarded them as politically unsound and unworthy of confidence. Signs of trouble became more and more distinct on the wider horizon of Washington. President Van Buren's defeat in 1840 was due almost entirely to questions of finance. But time had proved the wisdom of his policy, and there was a strong desire in the Northern and Eastern States for his re-nomination in 1844. Undoubtedly this would have occurred, but for the pressure of the question which was now casting all others into the shade and throwing a disastrous shadow on the entire country.

Texas, a part of Mexico, had declared her independence of the mother country, and successfully resisted attempts to reduce her to subjection. At this fatal juncture the idea was broached of bringing the revolted Mexican province into the American Union. On announcing her independence Texas had established slavery, but prohibited the importation of negroes from all parts of the world excepting the United States. Mr. Calhoun, under the administration of President Tyler, negotiated a treaty of annexation. This was done, as he frankly avowed, in the interests of the slave-holding people of the South, and with a view to preserve and perpetuate that institution. While the question was pending it was understood that Great Britain was using her influence to induce the Mexican Government to acknowledge the independence of Texas, on condition that she should abolish slavery and agree not to be annexed to the United States. Thus the question of slavery was set in a new light. A party had been formed who, forsaking the ground taken by their predecessors, no longer tolerated the idea that slavery should be allowed to waste away and die out by degrees, but, on the contrary, desired to preserve, strengthen, and perpetuate what my father once eloquently characterized as "the solitary monument left among us of a barbarous age." The reader may imagine how thoughtful men must have become at this turn of affairs, and to what searchings of heart it must have given rise.

But the South was united, and thoroughly in earnest; and they demanded the opinions of the men of the North on the subject of annexation, with all that it implied. The position of Mr. Van Buren, as a competitor for the Democratic candidacy in 1844, must be understood at once; and the question was peremptory, "Are you, or are you not, in favor of the annexation of Texas?" To this Mr. Van Buren replied that he was opposed to that measure. But his opposition, as stated by himself, was based on grounds of international law and the comity of peoples and governments: we had no right to take a portion of the territory of a nation with whom we were at peace; Texas had not so thoroughly established its position as to force from the mother country an acknowledgment of its independence. The position thus taken killed Mr. Van Buren with the South; and at the Baltimore Convention, although a majority of the delegates went there with instructions to nominate him, yet, by the adherence to the two-thirds rule, he was defeated. Thereupon the name of Mr. Wright was brought forward. He, anticipating the result, had already sent a letter, to be read in the event of Mr. Van Buren's discomfiture, in which, in the spirit of a man of honor, he absolutely refused to accept a nomination which should come to him through the misfortunes of his friend. The Convention agreed, after long deliberation, to nominate James K. Polk, of Tennessee. The Northern Democracy were compelled to submit with what grace they could. It was spoken of as a magnanimous sacrifice on their part. It was a sacrifice indeed, and one of those which call for many more in sequence.

It will be remembered that slavery had been already established in Texas before it asked for annexation. The Baltimore Convention adopted a resolution in favor of the immediate reception of that country into the Union. The measure was opposed, however, by many Democrats, some concurring with Mr. Van Buren in the views which he had expressed on the subject, others fearing that the measure would indefinitely postpone the extinction of slavery. It may be inferred that,

under these circumstances, Mr. Wright felt reluctant to accept the nomination for Governor. He was strongly opposed to the annexation, and therefore to the Baltimore platform; yet if elected it would be his duty to keep in accord with the new administration. There was no escape for him, however. The life of the American politician is ever a life of sacrifice. The fall elections decided the double question before the people: Mr. Polk was elected President, and Mr. Wright found himself Governor of New York, and in an extremely embarrassing position.

Mr. Wright's chair in the Senate now became vacant, though five years of his term remained. About the same time the place of his colleague, Nathaniel P. Tallmadge, also became vacant, on his appointment by the President to be Governor of the Territory of Wisconsin. It was necessary to elect a Senator to serve for the remainder of Mr. Wright's term, and another for the six weeks of Mr. Tallmadge's term which yet remained; and farther necessary to make another election for the full term of six years, to commence on the retirement of Mr. Tallmadge. For these purposes a Democratic caucus was held February 24, 1845. On that occasion the feud between the two sections of the party was disclosed in all its intensity. The conflict, which was sharp, ended in the election of General Dix to be the successor of Senator Wright, and Daniel S. Dickinson to succeed Senator Tallmadge, while Mr. Dickinson was also elected for the six-years term, in spite of the strong opposition of the radical members of the caucus. This was a triumph for the conservatives, and a defeat for the friends of Governor Wright. The closing years of the great statesman's life were overcast by shadows; adverse influences were evidently in the ascendant, not only at Washington, but close about him and at home.

Next to the Presidency, no place was so much desired, in the times which we are now reviewing, as that of Senator of the United States. The body was illustrious through the fame of its members, who generally exhibited the very flower

and highest outcome of American political life; dignified, powerful, respected, it was the pride of the nation, and one of its main bulwarks. There men, relieved from the vexations of petty concerns, breathed a calmer air; they resided in a charming capital, enjoyed an agreeable society, mingled with representatives of the leading nations of the world, had a tenure of office much longer than that of the Chief Magistracy of the Union, and thus were somewhat independent of the changes of administration and the vicissitudes of public life. The Senator of the United States had a certain freedom of action; he might outlive adverse influences; he was secure from the assaults of a capricious constituency; according to the use and law of social etiquette he and his family ranked second only to the President. The height of ordinary ambition was satisfied by attainment to that place; and men once securely seated there would have been content to hold it on and on, asking no more. One cannot doubt the sincerity of the expressions in which Mr. Wright announced his distress at being thrown from that delightful eminence into the whirlpools and quicksands at Albany.

The record of my father's work in the Senate of the United States will be found in the first volume of his collected speeches. He prepared the volumes with great care, and gave them to the public in the year 1864. At the beginning of the first volume is this dedication:

"TO MY WIFE.

"*You have known for several years my intention to collect and publish for preservation and reference the speeches which I delivered on the leading questions of the day while representing the State of New York in the Senate of the United States. They form the greater part of the material of these volumes. I have added several occasional addresses and a few of the numerous official reports made by me during my connection with public affairs. This collection, designed chiefly to make those who are to come after us acquainted with the part I have borne in the national movement during a quarter of a century of extraordinary activity and excitement, I dedicate to you, as an imperfect acknowledgment of the intelligent and devoted co-operation which you have lent me in all the vicissitudes and labors of my life.*"

I shall have occasion to refer to this volume in giving an account of the years spent at Washington, from December 1, 1844, till March 4, 1849.

The bill for the annexation of Texas came before the Senate soon after General Dix had taken his seat in that body. It passed the House of Representatives January 25, 1845, by a vote of 120 to 98, and the Senate by a vote of 27 to 25, February 27. General Dix was one of those who voted for the bill. His action was sharply criticised at the time; and he wrote to a friend, five years afterward, that he intended to give a full explanation of his reasons for the vote. I have not been able to find the paper referred to, if it was ever drafted; but I shall give, by-and-by, the reasons for my belief that the charge of inconsistency based on his course at that time cannot be sustained. For the present let it be remembered that slavery was in existence in Texas, and formed a part of the political system of that country, before the question of annexation came before Congress, and that it lay south of the line fixed in 1821 as that which was to constitute thenceforth the dividing line between the slaveholding and non-slaveholding population.

General Dix made his first speech in the Senate February 18 and 19, 1846, on the Oregon question, then before Congress. The territory on the north-west coast of America, west of the Rocky Mountains, known as Oregon, and long in dispute between the United States and Great Britain, was, by a convention between the two countries, concluded October 20, 1818, made free to the vessels, citizens, and subjects of both for the period of ten years. This agreement was continued in force and indefinitely extended by a convention of August 26, 1827. In consequence of collisions between the people of the two countries within the disputed territory, resolutions were introduced into the Senate in February, 1846, requiring the President to give notice of the abrogation of the last-mentioned convention, in accordance with one of its stipulations. A portion of the Senators were in favor of

adjusting the controversy by adopting the 49th parallel of latitude as the boundary, leaving to Great Britain the territory north of it; and the others of insisting on the abandonment by Great Britain of the whole country as far north as 54° 40′, from which line northward the title of Russia had been acknowledged by both the parties to the pending dispute. General Dix, while asserting the title of the United States to the whole territory derived from the discoveries and occupation of Spain, was nevertheless in favor of the compromise line of 49°, which had been offered to Great Britain in previous negotiations; and his speech, which occupied two days in delivery, was an argument in favor of his position.

The greater part of this address might very properly be reprinted as a publication of an historical society. It contains a minute and entertaining account of the voyages and discoveries of the Spanish and English navigators, beginning with Ferrelo, the pilot of Cabrillo, the commander of an expedition fitted out in Mexico A.D. 1543, forty-one years after the discovery of San Domingo by Columbus, and continuing with a relation of the acts of Sir Francis Drake, Juan de Fuca, Vizcaino, Perez, Heceta, Quadra, and Maurelle. The Russian navigators are mentioned, and Captain Cook, who landed at Nootka Sound in 1778, and Berkeley and Meares, Martinez and Vancouver. Copious notes and references enrich this portion of the text, after which follows a severe criticism on the speeches of the Earl of Clarendon and of Lord John Russell in the House of Commons in protest against the positions taken by President Polk in his inaugural address relating to the discovery of the Columbia River, and the claim of the American Government founded on that fact.

General Dix, while defending the Spanish title to the northwest coast, by stating the historical facts on which it rested, argued in favor of leaving the whole question in the hands of the administration, relying on its firmness and sense of rectitude to sustain the just rights of the American people and to

respect those of others. He had no fear of war with Great Britain; he felt sure that the British Government, aware of the invalidity of their title, would not embark in a contest which must draw on them the condemnation of all civilized communities; he believed that even if war should come we were better prepared to meet it than was supposed; but he felt confident that the good-sense of both countries would revolt at a contest which would bring no good to either, and that an adjustment of existing difficulties could be secured on terms honorable to both nations.

It is well known that the question was settled by the adoption of the 49th parallel as the boundary line, under a treaty negotiated by the Hon. Louis McLane, and ratified by the Senate during the same session in which this debate took place.

The speech on the Oregon question was the first made by the new Senator. At its close Mr. Thomas H. Benton, the father of the Senate, so called from his six successive elections and thirty years' service in that body, rose and said, in beginning his remarks, "that it had not been his intention to address the Senate in relation to our title to Oregon, but if he had intended to speak on that branch of the subject he should have relinquished his purpose after listening to the very able and lucid exposition of it by the honorable Senator from New York. That gentleman had placed the American title to Oregon on grounds that were impregnable, and on which it must forever stand. A speech more replete with historical facts, evincing greater research, or more crowded with pertinent remark and convincing argument, it had never been his lot to hear, and he could not refrain from congratulating that honorable gentleman on the important service he had rendered to his country, and not less upon the honor which he had gained for himself. He would leave the question of title where that Senator had placed it, and turn his attention to a different branch of the subject."*

* *Daily National Intelligencer*, Washington, February 20, 1846.

It has been said of this his first speech in the Senate that "his historical knowledge and clear perception of the law of nations, the purity and force of his style in debate, were strikingly developed in the memorable discussion of the Oregon question. This masterly effort placed him at once in the front rank of well-informed statesmen and powerful debaters. That exciting topic called out no abler speech, nor one which met with more universal favor in the Senate and among the people." It is believed that the administration though not in favor of the compromise, was unduly influenced by the clamor of a noisy and reckless faction, whose cry was, "Fifty-four forty, or fight." Sound sense and calm wisdom, however, carried the day, and the laurels of the peaceful settlement of an ugly question were gracefully and modestly worn by the Senator from New York.

On the 27th of April following General Dix addressed the Senate on the subject of French spoliations. I well remember the earnestness with which he was wont to express himself in our conversations on the subject. Prudent and economical, and averse to expenditures not justified by necessity or propriety, nothing exasperated the General more than attempts to draw on the public treasury for the benefit of the harpies who hover about it. The bill which he strenuously and successfully opposed provided for the satisfaction of claims of American citizens for spoliations on their property committed by the French prior to the ratification of the convention with France in September, 1800. These claimants were numerous and persistent; for all I know to the contrary they may still be cherishing a hope which should long since have been effectually blighted; but General Dix, regarding these demands as without a shadow of justice to support them, and indignant at the proposition to put money of the public into the pockets of individuals who, as he thought, had no right to it, took a lively satisfaction in fighting the scheme, and gave it, at that time, another quietus. His speech on this subject, like that already referred to, is full

of learning, and would form by itself an interesting chapter in the history of the United States from 1777 to 1800.

I come now to a subject of much greater importance. General Dix took his seat in the Senate on the 27th of January; on the 30th he was appointed a member of the Committee on Commerce, by Mr. Mangum, then President *pro tempore* of that body. At the next session he was elected a member of the same committee, and for two sessions was its chairman. His labors on that committee were indefatigable, and their result is nowhere better known or more highly appreciated than in the city of New York. It had long been a cherished object among commercial men to secure by law the right to convey foreign importations through the country, and to re-export them with the privilege of drawback. At the commencement of this session Mr. Ashley, of Arkansas, had called the attention of the Senate to this subject, so far as it related to the adjacent Mexican States. To secure this object a bill was reported by the Committee on Commerce, and had passed the Senate before General Dix took his seat. The bill was returned from the House with an amendment extending this privilege to the British North American possessions adjoining the United States. These amendments were vastly more important than the original bill itself, and especially to the State of New York. The bill as amended was referred to the Committee on Commerce on the 22d of February. On the amendments the committee were divided, General Dix sustaining them. Mr. Huntington, the chairman, consented to report the bill and amendments, he stating to the Senate the condition of the committee. The question of concurring in the House amendments came up on the last day of the session, and elicited an interesting debate. General Dix was the principal advocate of the amendments, which were finally adopted. But for his exertions they would not have been favorably reported upon by the committee. But for his defence of them it is not probable they would have received the favorable consideration of the Senate. To his efforts is New York mainly

indebted for a measure the value and importance of which are not easily calculated.

Notwithstanding the great value of his services in this matter, the commercial world deem them inferior to those relating to the Warehouse Bill. No measure of a recent date has proved equally useful to commerce. This bill was introduced in the Senate on the 21st of January, 1846, by General Dix, and, after varied and persevering opposition, finally passed on the 15th of July. It was vehemently resisted by Messrs. Huntington, Crittenden, Clayton, Simmons, and other prominent Senators. Its defence rested solely upon General Dix, though Mr. Webster and Mr. Calhoun briefly assigned the reasons why they should vote for it. The merit of introducing and carrying this great measure may be safely ascribed to the Senator from New York.

As the author of this bill he was looked to as its defender. His speeches on it, delivered on the 19th of June, 1846, and on the 9th of July next following, are regarded as irrefragable evidence of his ability to comprehend the subject of trade and commerce, and to guard and protect the great interests involved in that department of political economy. Although a reply to his first speech was made by Senator Huntington, of Connecticut, his last, reviewing it and the English warehousing system, remains unanswered to this day. Mr. Huntington did not publish his speech. General Dix's closing speech is a monument of the industry and ability of its author. The warehousing system, as established by law, is daily conferring on commerce and business all the advantages predicted by its friends; and the city of New York feels, and has in various ways acknowledged, her obligations to him, as the author of this great and salutary measure.*

If General Dix had been disposed to make a change in his position his stay at Washington would have been very short.

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* *See* Twenty-second Annual Report of the Chamber of Commerce, New York, pp. 1–9.

Early in July he was offered the mission to England. It was just after the speeches on the warehouse system. He immediately wrote to Mr. Wright on the subject as follows:

"*Private.*

"Washington, July 10, 1846.

"My dear Sir,—The President sent for me this morning and offered me the mission to London. Mr. McLane will return in August. The President said he had contemplated making me the offer for some time, but had not communicated his intention to any one till to-day. He had mentioned it this morning to two members of his Cabinet, who had concurred fully in the propriety of the selection. He said he desired to take the occasion to say that no one in the Senate had given him a more fair or cordial support, that he should regret losing me, etc., but that the position he offered me was one of great importance, and might become more so from our unfortunate relations to Mexico, and he desired to place in it a person in whom he had confidence. I mention these things that you may understand the whole matter. His manner was very kind and frank, and I desire to treat the matter in a corresponding spirit. He desired no answer, but wished me to consider the proposition, and advise him as soon as I should have decided what to do.

"Now, I have only to add on this subject that I wish you to communicate this matter to no one but Mr. Flagg, if you think you and he are competent to decide the matter. If you are not, you may call in the Magician;* but I should think the question might be settled without any supernatural agency. I feel a little pride in having this matter kept secret, unless the President chooses to mention it himself. I ask no advice, unless you have a fancy to give it. If I am left to myself, I shall decide the question 'to the best of my ability.'

"The President desired me to say to you, if I should write, that he had no schemes of conquest in view in respect to Mexico, no intention to take possession of any portion of her territory with a view to hold it, and that his only object was to push military operations so vigorously that she should be made willing to adjust the matters in dispute between her and us on fair terms. As to the regiment designed for California, the intention was to have it discharged there, and it was, therefore, deemed wise to have it composed of persons who would be willing to remain and become citizens of our own territory on the Pacific—*i. e.*, Oregon. He said there had been an unintentional omission in failing to communicate with

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* This was the *sobriquet* of Mr. Van Buren.

you at an earlier day, which he regretted—and he earnestly hoped the explanation which had been made would be satisfactory.

"Truly yours, JOHN A. DIX.

"SILAS WRIGHT."

It was, to say the least, a coincidence that this offer of a place abroad should have been made to the General at that particular time. No one would venture to impugn the President's motives or question his sincerity; but there are always powers behind the throne, whose movements are, perhaps, cautious enough to escape detection from the throne itself. No doubt there were those at Washington and at Albany who would gladly have got rid of one whose opposition to their designs was foreseen and dreaded; and if he had accepted the offer, and been absent from the country for three or four years, the history would probably have been very different. But, after due deliberation and consultation with political friends and those of the home circle, the offer was declined.

At the first session of the Twenty-ninth Congress, General Dix was appointed a member of the Committee on Military Affairs. His training in the army and long experience and close study qualified him for duties which were rendered peculiarly arduous by the breaking out of war between Mexico and the United States. He was actively engaged in maturing and carrying through the Senate the bills relating to the organization, transportation, and management of the forces which were sent to Mexico. On the 4th of January, 1847, he spoke in favor of a bill to appoint a Lieutenant-general to command the military forces of the United States during the war, a measure which had been recommended by the President in a special Message to Congress. On the 1st of March ensuing he made a speech against the passage of what was known as the Three Million Bill. As this involved the question of the extension of slavery, the attention of the reader is called to the principles which lay hidden under the simple proposition to aid the government against a foreign enemy.

The annexation of Texas to the United States led, of

course, to a rupture with the Mexican Government. In May, 1846, General Zachary Taylor crossed the Rio Grande and commenced active hostilities. The impression was that the war could not last long; and the President asked Congress for a grant of two millions of dollars, to enable him to negotiate for a satisfactory adjustment of our difficulties. Since indemnification for losses sustained by American citizens must necessarily form one of the items of the settlement, and since it was deemed desirable to acquire territory on the Pacific coast belonging to Mexico, the means to facilitate such transfer were desired by the executive, and a bill framed with that view was introduced into Congress. But when this bill came up for consideration Mr. Wilmot, a member of the House of Representatives from the State of Pennsylvania, offered, by way of amendment to it, what at once became famous as the "Wilmot Proviso." It was as follows:

"Provided, that there shall neither be slavery nor involuntary servitude in any territory on the continent of America which shall hereafter be acquired by or annexed to the United States by virtue of this appropriation, or in any other manner whatever, except for crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted. Provided always, that any person escaping into that territory, from whom labor or service is lawfully claimed in any one of the United States, such person may be lawfully reclaimed and carried out of such territory to the person claiming his or her service."

What the administration desired was to buy a part or the whole of New Mexico. The Wilmot Proviso stipulated that such territory, if purchased, or acquired in any way, should not be cut up and made into slave-holding States. The vital question therefore was, whether Congress would grant money to purchase free territory with a view to establishing slavery therein.

The bill providing for the appropriation was introduced into the House of Representatives on the 8th of August, 1846, and passed, with Mr. Wilmot's amendment, the same

day, every member from the State of New York voting in its favor. It went to the Senate late that night. The following day was Sunday. On Monday morning the bill was taken up in the Senate, but no vote was had; Mr. Davis, of Massachusetts, having spoken against it until the hour for adjournment *sine die* arrived.

To understand the issue presented by the Wilmot Proviso it must be observed that its advocates sustained it on the distinct ground that, as slavery had been abolished throughout the Mexican Republic, the acquisition of territory without prohibiting slavery would, on the theory asserted by the Southern States, lead to its restoration where it had ceased to exist, and make the United States responsible for its extension to districts in which universal freedom had been established by the fundamental law.

On the 4th of January, 1847, during the next session of Congress, a new bill, similar to the former, but increasing the amount of the appropriation to three millions of dollars, was brought in by Mr. Preston King, a Democratic member from St. Lawrence County, New York. This bill, which also contained the Wilmot Proviso, passed the House of Representatives,* all the New York representatives, with a single exception, voting for it. When the bill reached the Senate an at-

* On the passage of the bill in the House of Representatives, Mr. John Van Buren wrote to General Dix in this vigorous strain, anent the look of things at the capital:

"I have been suffering for some days with a lame arm from rheumatism, and cannot therefore write you at length as I should wish. But I am so rejoiced at the passage of Wilmot's Proviso that I cannot help congratulating you on it. Our friends have stood nobly up to this great blow struck for freedom. How helpless and contemptible the administration have become! Polk's consolidation of the party by throwing all the honest men overboard has resulted as might have been expected. Calhoun's speech is very able and very treasonable. I think General Jackson would have hung him if he had been in Washington as President. Such an exposure and exaggeration of the weakness of our country for the benefit of an enemy in time of war is unparalleled."

tempt was made by the advocates of the extension of slavery to strike out the proviso. General Dix spoke upon this question March 1, 1847. If it had been possible to avert the evil which was impending, and to change the minds of men by the force of argument, by the weight of historical testimony, and by the impression sometimes produced by dignified, earnest, and courteous remonstrance, those results might have followed on the delivery of this noble appeal.

General Dix first alluded to the fact that the legislatures of nine of the non-slaveholding States had already adopted resolutions in accordance with the views which he held. The Legislature of New York, in particular, had, by an almost unanimous vote in both branches, instructed their Senators and requested their representatives to use their best efforts to procure the insertion, in any act for the acquisition of territory, by purchase or otherwise, of an unalterable and fundamental article or provision forever excluding slavery from such territory. He considered the rights of the original parties to the Constitution, in respect to the subject of slavery within their own limits, and showed that the ground taken by the advocates of the Wilmot Proviso, so far from being new, was precisely the same as that held more than sixty years before by Mr. Jefferson, with the unanimous support of the representatives of Georgia, North and South Carolina, and Virginia: it was the old, traditional, American position. He repelled with earnestness the charge that the course of the Northern States was aggressive; on the contrary, it had been from the earliest period liberal and forbearing. They had acquiesced in every proposition to add Southern territory to the Union; they had concurred in appropriating money for the purpose, contributing their own share, and bearing a part of the burden of the purchase. They had united in the purchase of Louisiana and Florida, and in the annexation of Texas, by which measures the institution of slavery had been extended over an area exceeding that of the thirteen original States. He was no abolitionist; he admitted to the fullest

extent the exclusive control of each State over the question within the limits of its own jurisdiction, its right to be protected from interference and intermeddling within its own borders; it was he who introduced resolutions at the first meeting ever held at the North in opposition to the movements of the Abolitionists. Nevertheless, he and those whom he represented were accused of aggression, because they would not consent to the extension of slavery to free territory. This the North would not agree to. There was a universal opinion on that subject pervading the whole North and West. Consent would never be given to the extension of slavery beyond its present limits. It was regarded by all parties as involving a principle which rose far above the fleeting interests of the day—a principle which the North should not be asked to yield.

General Dix referred to the threats then openly made of the dissolution of the Union. He said:

"I can hardly think those who so connect the two subjects are aware of the position in which they place themselves. It is virtually declaring that unless we will consent to bring free territory into the Union, and leave it open to the extension of slavery, the Union shall be dissolved. Our Southern friends have heretofore stood upon the ground of defence; of maintaining slavery within their own limits against interference from without. The ground of extension is now taken, and of extending slavery upon free territory. I cannot believe this position will be sustained by the Southern States. It is new ground, and is taken with avowals which are calculated to spread surprise and alarm throughout the non-slaveholding states. . . . I say for the State of New York, and in her name —I believe I do not misunderstand her resolutions—that she can never consent to become a party to the extension of slavery to free territory on this continent. If it is to be extended to new areas—areas now consecrated to free labor—the work must be done by other hands than hers; and she must

leave it to time and to the order of Providence to determine what shall be the legitimate fruits of measures which she believes to be wrong, and to which she can never yield her assent."

Let me give one more extract, full of significance, and now to be read with painful interest—it expresses the strife in a mind which weighs two evils against each other:

"Mr. President, I regret to hear either disunion or civil war spoken of in connection with this measure. But, I repeat, the former is to be preferred to the latter. In wars waged with foreign countries, deplorable as they always are, there are some moral fruits which atone, in a slight degree, for their accompanying evils. There is the sense of national honor—the parent of high achievement; the sentiment of patriotic devotion to the country, which shrinks from no labor or sacrifice in the public cause; and the feeling of mutual sympathy and dependence, which pervades and unites all classes in the hour of adversity and peril. Far as they are overbalanced by the domestic bereavement and the public evil which war always brings in its train, they serve to purify the thoughts of something of their selfishness by turning them away from the sordid channels in which they are too apt to run. But civil war has no ameliorations. It is pure, unmixed demoralization. It dissolves all national and domestic ties. It renders selfishness more odious by wedding it to hatred and cruelty. The after-generation which reaps the bitter harvest of intestine war is scarcely less to be commiserated than that by whose hands the poisonous seed is sown. Less, far less than these, would be the evils of disunion."*

I think there is no argument for the extension of slavery which is not met and answered in the speech from which I

* "Speeches and Addresses," vol. i., pp. 195–197.

have made this long extract; it is one of several on the same dire subject. He spoke, January 26, 1848, in support of a bill to raise an additional military force wherewith to retain possession of the territory of Mexico until she should consent to make peace on terms satisfactory to the United States—a measure opposed by Mr. Calhoun and South Carolina. He spoke, and for the last time, in the Senate, February 28, 1849, on the question of the institution of governments for the territories acquired from Mexico — a question embarrassed throughout by the determination of the Senators from the slave States to extend slavery to those territories, and by a majority of the Senators from the free States to guard, by an express prohibition, against what they deemed a moral and political evil, and the national dishonor of restoring it where it had been formally abolished. His views on this question may be gathered from those addresses. They appear to me to do honor to his clear head, his sensitive conscience, and his affectionate heart. They show an extreme solicitude to maintain the rights of our Southern brethren, a horror of disunion, a disposition to bear anything rather than provoke civil war; they exhibit patience, forbearance, toleration; the hope that Divine Providence might in some way avert the calamities which he foresaw already threatening in the future; a love for his State, a stronger love of the Union. These were the characteristics of that calm, conscientious, affectionate mind of the people of the North, which the Southern leaders could not understand, and scrupled not to provoke past all endurance, and drive at last to a point at which it was impossible any longer to forbear. It is needless to say—for all know the main facts—that the opposition led by General Dix and others was of no avail. The three million bill passed the Senate without the proviso. The settled determination of the Southern leaders wrung one victory after another from the hotly contested fields. Men like my father were forced into a minority; they were ostracized, they were put under the ban; they were stigmatized as traitors to their party and false

to Democratic traditions; for years they rested under the displeasure of administrations ruled by the sentiment of the slave power. The triumph, though brief, seemed for the time complete. In fact, it was no triumph, but a march downward, through some glare and pomp of temporary success, into night and silence. In the year 1847 they were scornfully voting down all propositions to arrest the extension of slavery, and endeavoring to provide for its perpetual continuance among us. On the 1st of January, 1863, by proclamation from Washington, every slave throughout this country was declared free. This was the outcome of the infatuation of the slavery propagandists. It is not so much to the North that the black owes his freedom to-day as to the South, which, not content with the protection afforded to that institution under the American Constitution, demanded its extension, and attempted to break up the Union when that demand was refused. If they had listened to the counsels of wisdom and prudence, and been content with the position held on that question by their own ancestors, the institution which they prized so highly might have been secure among them to this day.

From May, 1846, till February, 1848, the war with Mexico dragged its tedious length along. On the 4th of January, 1847, General Dix spoke on the bill to appoint a Lieutenant-general. On the 22d of February next following Zachary Taylor fought and won, at Buena Vista, the battle which made him President of the United States. Roger Sherman Dix, a pay-master in the army, was with General Taylor at the time, and, as chance would have it, saw service in that fight. One or two of his letters seem to merit a place in this story:

"Saltillo, Mexico, February 25, 1847.

"My dear Brother,—I have but a few moments to write you, but I have such news to communicate as will be gratifying to you and every American, man, woman, and child, and I therefore give it.

"We have had another fight with the Mexicans, and, as usual, have gained the victory. Santa Anna commanded in person. He had 20,000 troops—we had barely 5000. Skirmishing between the two armies com-

menced on the evening of the 22d (mark the day), and continued during the night. About 7 A.M. of the 23d the battle began in earnest, and we fought until 5 P.M., when the enemy retired from the field. The next morning they were in full retreat, and in the evening encamped about ten miles from the battle-ground, the last place at which they could get water for a long distance. Our position was a strong one, which we did not wish to lose, and we were weak in numbers, or we would have pursued them. They encamped at Agua Nueva; the battle was fought at 'Buena Vista,' ten miles this side.

"I was in the action from its commencement to its close—with General Taylor part of the time, General Wool part of the time, and carrying their orders to different parts of the field. I flatter myself I made myself almost as useful as ornamental. I came off, thanks to God, without a wound. How it was I know not, for the musket-balls flew thick as hail around me, and a cannon-shot would occasionally throw up the dust near me. 'Twas an awful fight, and 'tis said by all to be much harder than that of Monterey. Ten hours' fighting is *no trifle*. I came to Mexico to see the 'elephant.' I have seen him, and am perfectly willing never to see him again. General Wool behaved most nobly, and well has he earned the brevet of Major-general.

"I can hardly think that Santa Anna will try it again. Their loss, 'tis said (I do not believe it), was between three and four thousand, ours I do not think exceeds five hundred in killed and wounded. Many valuable lives have been lost. Captain Lincoln (son of Governor Levi Lincoln, of Massachusetts), Adjutant-general to General Wool, and one of the noblest, most chivalrous, and gallant soldiers, was killed at the commencement of the action, while encouraging an Indiana regiment to stand its ground.

"Lieutenant-colonel Henry Clay, Jr., of the Kentucky foot, is also numbered among the dead. A more gallant soldier or high-minded and honorable man never lived. He and Lincoln were among my best friends. Clay was my classmate when I entered West Point, and we have always been warm friends. Poor fellow, he is gone! Colonel Yell, of Arkansas, formerly Governor of the State, is among the killed, and many others whom I have not time to enumerate.

"I will only mention one thing more, and let it be strictly *entre nous*. I ought not, perhaps, either to say anything about it; but as I have commenced here goes:

"Soon after the fight commenced one of the Indiana regiments, which was exposed to a tremendous fire from the enemy, broke and ran. They were some distance off when General Wool met me—I was then with the dragoons, and about to charge with them—and ordered me to rally

them and bring them into action. I put spurs to my horse and galloped to the rear. They were broken into parties of three and four, and were more than half a mile from the fight. I stopped them; I urged, begged, and entreated them; then *cursed* and abused them; and finally, in about half an hour, with the aid of Captain Linnard, of the Topographical Engineers, I succeeded in collecting about half of the regiment; then, taking their flag (they were still somewhat panic-stricken), I called to them that if they were not a d——d set of cowards they would follow their flag, and I moved toward the field. They gave me three cheers, and I led them to the field and reported to General Wool. These men afterward fought bravely and never left the ground. Their General (Lane) and their Lieutenant-colonel (Haddon) both tried, without success, to bring them back; and Lane that evening, after the fight and again next morning, thanked me, and told me if it had not been for me they would never have returned to the fight. I do not know if General Taylor saw it, but General Lane mentioned it to him next morning. I felt that I had done my duty—that was enough for me. General Wool and Colonel Churchill both shook hands with me next morning and congratulated me (I suppose, upon the result of the battle).

"Santa Anna sent in a flag of truce before the fight, *requesting* General Taylor (merely to save the effusion of blood) to surrender with his army, saying that he had over 20,000 men, etc., etc., and promising to treat us kindly. General Taylor wrote him back, 'twas all the same if he had 50,000, and if he wanted us, he must come and take us,' thanking him at the same time for his kindness. The next morning he told his troops that ours were all volunteers, and he would whip us in ten minutes—a slight mistake. At one time I feared, as did many others, that the battle would go against us—'twas when *my* Indianians ran. They had turned our left flank and were pouring in their forces; but our artillery poured such discharges of grape into them that they soon fell back. I rode over the field the next day, and the sight sickened me; 'twas horrible—the wounded and the dead! Many of the poor Mexicans are now in our hospital and well cared for—officers as well as men. I think Santa Anna has got enough, and will now retire to San Luis. God grant it! for I am tired of such scenes as this.

"This will be handed you perhaps by Additional Paymaster, Major Coffee (son of old General Coffee). He takes the despatches of General Taylor to New Orleans, and probably to Washington. He has been with me for some weeks. He was in the battle, and is a noble fellow. Treat him kindly. Love to Catherine and all your family.

"Ever your affectionate brother, R. S. Dix.

"Hon. John A. Dix, U. S. Senator."

"Saltillo, Mexico, March 25, 1847.

"My dear Brother,—Ere this reaches you you will doubtless have seen an account of our late glorious victory at Buena Vista. I wrote you on the 25th, giving you a brief account of it.

"Santa Anna has retreated out of this province, and will undoubtedly push on to the city of Mexico, to prevent (I think) another revolution. His fate is sealed. The loss of this battle with such disparity of force is enough to *damn* him with the Mexican people and Congress. He has written to the Governor here that he has not been defeated—that he has captured three pieces of our cannon (this is true, and their loss *saved* us), and that he is going to *Matahuala*, about one hundred and twenty-five miles distant, to recruit his army. This is all stuff and nonsense. That place can't supply his army with provisions for *one day*. He has gone for good, and we shall, in my opinion, see no more of him on this line. I understand there are five regiments *en route* for this place. Had they been here before the battle Santa Anna would have been *routed*, for on his retreat we should have been strong enough to have pursued him. 'Tis well, however, as it is; we have gained a glorious victory. Had they attacked us the following day, I believe sincerely we should have been defeated. The best of the volunteer officers, or quite a number of them, had been killed, and their men had had enough of fighting, and no persuasions or entreaties or *cursings* could have got them to do any more; at least, they refused to move that evening. General Wool and myself rode on to one of the heights, where parts of two regiments were (and they those who had fought best), and endeavored to get them forward to the next height, and all that we could say was of no avail. General W. struck one or two officers with his sword, *but it would* not do. 'Tis true the men were nearly exhausted, but had Santa Anna then pushed forward two or three fresh regiments of infantry, the result of the battle would have been different. Thanks to God, he felt he had got enough, and so did his troops."

The successes of General Taylor gave us the virtual possession of the whole of Northern Mexico as far south as the mouth of the Rio Grande and the 26th parallel of latitude, comprehending about two-thirds of the territory of that unfortunate republic and about one-tenth of its inhabitants. The brilliant movements of General Scott subsequently augmented those acquisitions by the reduction of Vera Cruz and the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa; the capture of Jalapa, Perote, and Puebla; the surrender of the capital, and the occupation of the

three states of Vera Cruz, Puebla, and Mexico, with nearly two millions and a half of souls. The chief towns were reduced, the military forces which defended them captured or dispersed, their civil authorities superseded, and the whole machinery of government within the conquered states virtually transferred to our hands; and these results had been achieved by an army at no period exceeding 15,000 men, and against forces from three to five times more numerous than those actually engaged on our side in every action since the fall of Vera Cruz. Referring to these extraordinary successes, General Dix, when presenting some army petitions in the Senate, spoke as follows:

"I will not detain the Senate by entering into any detailed review of these events with a view to enforce the appeal contained in the petition on the attention. I hope, however, I may be indulged in saying, in justice to those who bore a part in them, that the first conquest of Mexico cannot, as it appears to me, be compared with the second, either as to the obstacles overcome or as to the relative strength of the invaders. The triumphs of Cortez were achieved by policy, and by superiority in discipline and in the implements of warfare. The use of firearms, until then unknown to the inhabitants of Mexico, was sufficient in itself to make his force, small as it was, irresistible. In the eyes of that simple and superstitious people he seemed armed with superhuman power. Other circumstances combined to facilitate his success. The native tribes, by whom the country was possessed, were distinct communities, not always acknowledging the same head, and often divided among themselves by implacable hostility and resentments. Cortez, by his consummate prudence and art, turned these dissensions to his own account; he lured the parties to them into his own service, and when he presented himself at the gates of the city of Mexico he was at the head of four thousand of the most warlike of the natives, as auxiliaries to the band of Spaniards with which he commenced his march

from Vera Cruz. Thus his early successes were as much the triumph of policy as of arms. General Scott and the gallant band he led had no such advantages. The whole population of the country, from Vera Cruz to Mexico, was united as one man against him, and animated by the fiercest animosity. He was opposed by military forces armed like his own, often better disciplined, occupying positions chosen by themselves, strong by nature, and fortified according to the strictest rules of art. These obstacles were overcome by his skill as a tactician, aided by a corps of officers unsurpassed for their knowledge of the art of attack and defence, and by the indomitable courage of their followers. With half his force left on the battle-field or in the hospital, and with less than six thousand men, after a series of desperate contests, he took possession of the city of Mexico, containing nearly two hundred thousand inhabitants, and defended by the remnant of an army of more than thirty thousand soldiers. I confess I know nothing in modern warfare which exceeds in brilliancy the movements of the American army from the Gulf to the city of Mexico. I shall not attempt to speak of them in the language of eulogium. They are not a fit theme for such comment. Like the achievements of General Taylor and his brave men on the Rio Grande, at Monterey, and Buena Vista, the highest and most appropriate praise is contained in the simplest statement of facts."

General Dix addressed the Senate, January 26, 1848, in support of a bill to raise an additional military force with a view to retain possession of the territory of Mexico until she should consent to make peace on terms satisfactory to the United States. Mr. Calhoun opposed this measure, having offered resolutions to the effect that "to conquer Mexico, and to hold it, either as a province or incorporated into the Union, would be inconsistent with the avowed object for which war has been prosecuted; a departure from the settled policy of the government; in conflict with its character and genius;

and in the end subversive of our free and popular institutions." The public mind was divided between two propositions: the first was, to withdraw our forces from the Mexican territory, and leave the subject of indemnity for injuries and the adjustment of a boundary between the two republics to future negotiation, relying on a magnanimous course of conduct on our part to produce a corresponding feeling on the part of Mexico; and the second was, to retain possession of the territory which had been already acquired until Mexico should consent to make a treaty of peace providing ample compensation for the wrongs of which the American people had complained, and settling to their satisfaction the boundary in dispute. The latter course was advocated by General Dix. Desiring above all things a restoration of permanently amicable relations between the two countries, and the removal of the causes of dissensions, he was firmly of the opinion that the withdrawal of our forces, instead of bringing about a speedy and lasting peace, would have the opposite effect; that it would open a field of domestic dissension, and possibly of external interference in the affairs of that distracted country, to be followed, in all probability, by a renewal of active hostilities with us, and under circumstances in which the advantages already gained would have been lost, and the whole subject would be embarrassed with fresh dangers and evils.

This speech is especially interesting, inasmuch as he took up and considered the alleged right of European powers to intervention in the affairs of this continent. That right had been formally asserted in the French Chamber of Deputies, in the year 1845, by M. Guizot, Minister of Foreign Affairs, as the organ of the Government of France. He then declared that it belonged to France "to protect, by the authority of her name, the independence of states, and the equilibrium of the great political forces in America." That notion of trying to carry out the European system of the balance of power on another continent has long since been exploded; no foreign

government would for an instant entertain it. An able argument, and a manly protest against it, will be found in the address to which I now refer. General Dix's words were the true expression of the American spirit, which would not brook the interference of the European powers in the affairs of this side of the world. The position taken by him is now, and has long been, conceded by those powers, although at that day there was no hesitation in asserting their arrogant claim. In the course of his remarks he said:

"Mr. President, any attempt by a European power to interpose in the affairs of Mexico, either to establish a monarchy or to maintain, in the language of M. Guizot, 'the equilibrium of the great political forces in America,' would be the signal for a war far more important in its consequences and inscrutable in its issues than this. We could not submit to such interposition if we would. The public opinion of the country would compel us to resist it. We are committed by the most formal declarations, first made by President Monroe in 1823, and repeated by the present Chief Magistrate of the Union. We have protested in the most solemn manner against any farther colonization by European powers on this continent. We have protested against any interference in the political concerns of the independent States in this hemisphere. A protest, it is true, does not imply that the ground it assumes is to be maintained at all hazards, and, if necessary, by force of arms. Great Britain protested against the interference of France in the affairs of Spain in 1823; she has more recently protested against the absorption of Cracow by Austria, as a violation of the political order of Europe, settled at Vienna by the Allied Sovereigns; and against the Montpensier marriage, as a violation of the treaty of Utrecht; but I do not remember that in either case she did anything more than to proclaim to the world her dissent from the acts against which she entered her protest. It has always seemed to me to be unwise in a government to put forth manifestoes

without being prepared to maintain them by acts, or to make declarations of abstract principle until the occasion has arrived for enforcing them. The declarations of a President having no power to make war without a vote of Congress, or even to employ the military force of a country, except to defend our own territory, is very different from the protest of a sovereign holding the issues of peace and war in his own hands. But the former may not be less effectual when they are sustained, as I believe those of Presidents Monroe and Polk are, in respect to European interference on the American continent, by an undivided public opinion, even though they may not have received a formal response from Congress. I hold, therefore, if any such interposition as that to which I have referred should take place, resistance on our part would inevitably follow, and we should become involved in controversies of which no man could foresee the end."

I quote a striking passage against the aggressive policy of Great Britain:

"In the references I have made to France and Great Britain, I have been actuated by no feeling of unkindness or hostility to either. Rapid and wide-spread as has been the progress of the latter, we have never sought to interfere with it. She holds one-third of the North American continent. She has established her dominion in the Bermudas, the West Indies, and in Guiana, on the South American continent. She holds Balize, on the Bay of Yucatan, in North America, with a district of about fourteen thousand square miles, if we may trust her own geographical delineations. We see her in the occupation of territories in every quarter of the globe, vastly, inordinately extended, and still ever extending herself. It is not easy to keep pace with her encroachments. A few years ago the Indus was the western boundary of her Indian empire. She has passed it. She has overrun Afghanistan and Beloochistan, though, I believe, she has temporarily withdrawn from the former. She stands at the gates of Persia.

She has discussed the policy of passing Persia and making the Tigris her western boundary in Asia. One stride more would place her upon the shores of the Mediterranean, and her armies would no longer find their way to India by the circumnavigation of Africa. Indeed, she has now, for all government purposes of communication, except the transportation of troops and munitions of war, a direct intercourse with the East. Her steamers of the largest class run from England to Alexandria; from Alexandria there is a water-communication with Cairo—some sixty miles; from Cairo it is but eight hours overland to Suez, at the head of the Red Sea; from Suez her steamers of the largest class run to Aden, a military station of hers at the mouth of the Red Sea; from Aden to Ceylon, and from Ceylon to China. She is not merely conquering her way back from Hindostan. She has raised her standard beyond it. She has entered the confines of the Celestial Empire. She has gained a permanent foothold within it; and who that knows her can believe that pretexts will long be wanting to extend her dominion there? Though it is for commerce mainly that she is thus adding to the number and extent of her dependencies, it is not for commerce alone. The love of power and extended empire is one of the efficient principles of her gigantic efforts and movements. No island, however remote, no rock, however barren, on which the Cross of St. George has once been unfurled, is ever willingly relinquished, no matter how expensive or inconvenient it may be to maintain it. She may be said literally to encircle the globe by an unbroken chain of dependencies. Nor is it by peaceful means that she is thus extending herself. She propagates commerce, as Mohammedanism propagated religion, by fire and sword. If she negotiates, it is with fleets and armies at the side of her ambassadors, in order, to use the language of her diplomacy, 'to give force to their representations.' She is essentially and eminently a military power, unequalled on the sea and unsurpassed on the land. Happily, the civilization which distin-

guishes her at home goes with her, and obliterates some of the bloody traces of her march to unlimited empire."

Nor is the following a less striking picture by way of contrast to the passages just quoted:

"One position we have assumed, and I trust it will be maintained with inflexible firmness—that nations beyond this continent cannot be permitted to interfere with our progress, so long as there is on our part no violation of their rights. I would resist at the outset, as matter of the gravest offence, all indications of such interference. If the abstract right could be asserted on grounds of international law, there has been nothing in the nature of our extension, or the means by which it has been accomplished, to warrant its application to us. From the formation of our government, for nearly three-quarters of a century, military power—brute force—has had no agency in the conquests we have achieved. We have overrun no provinces or countries abounding in wealth. Our capital has witnessed no triumphal entries of returning armies, bearing with them the spoils and trophies of conquest. Our ships have not been seen returning from subjugated districts, freighted with the tributes of an extended commerce. In the extension of our commercial intercourse we have not, like our Anglo-Saxon mother, been seen hewing down with the sword, with unrelenting and remorseless determination, every obstacle which opposed itself to her progress. Our career thus far has been stained by no such companionship with evil. Our conquests have been the peaceful achievements of enterprise and industry—the one leading the way into the wilderness, the other following and completing the acquisition by the formal symbols of occupancy and possession. They have looked to no objects beyond the conversion of uninhabited wilds into abodes of civilization and freedom. Their only arms were the axe and the ploughshare. The accumulations of wealth they have brought were all extracted from the bosom of the earth by the unoffending hand of

labor. If, in the progress of our people Westward, they shall occupy territories not our own, but to become ours by amicable arrangements with the governments to which they belong, which of the nations of the earth shall venture to stand forth in the face of the civilized world and call on us to pause in this great work of human improvement? It is as much the interest of Europe as it is ours that we should be permitted to follow undisturbed the path which, in the allotment of national fortunes, we seem appointed to tread. Our country has long been a refuge for those who desire a larger liberty than they enjoy under their own rulers. It is an outlet for the political disaffection of the Old World — for social elements which might there have become sources of agitation, but which are here silently and tranquilly incorporated into our system, ceasing to be principles of disturbance as they attain the greater freedom, which was the object of their separation from less congenial combinations in other quarters of the globe. Nay, more: it is into the vast reservoir of the Western wilderness, teeming with fruitfulness and fertility, that Europe is constantly pouring, under our protection, her human surpluses, unable to draw from her own bosom the elements of their support and reproduction. She is literally going along with us in our march to prosperity and power, to share with us its triumphs and its fruits. Happily, this continent is not a legitimate theatre for the political arrangements of the sovereigns of the eastern hemisphere. Their armies may range, undisturbed by us, over the plains of Europe, Asia, and Africa, dethroning monarchs, partitioning kingdoms, and subverting republics, as interest or caprice may dictate. But political justice demands that in one quarter of the globe self-government, freedom, the arts of peace, shall be permitted to work out, unmolested, the great purposes of human civilization."

It is a curious fact, and one which shows what good ground there was to fear European intervention, if the relations be-

tween the United States and Mexico had been left at loose ends, that on the very day after this speech was delivered General Dix received from a friend in New York, who could have no knowledge of his intention to speak, much less of the topics he designed to discuss, a translation from a speech delivered to the Cortes of Spain, December 1, 1847, by Señor Olozaga. It appeared from that speech that, but a short time previous to M. Guizot's declaration above referred to, large sums were expended in Spain for the purpose of establishing a monarchy in Mexico, and placing a Spanish prince upon the throne.*

Soon after the delivery of this speech the treaty of peace was made, by which Mexico ceded to the United States the line of the Rio Grande as a boundary, and the territory of New Mexico and California, in consideration of which the United States agreed to pay her the sum of $15,000,000, and to assume her debts to American citizens to an extent not to exceed $3,500,000.

The termination of the war with Mexico, and the results attained by that contest, prepared the way for an acrimonious renewal of the strife between the Northern and Southern sections. The question was as to the equal rights of our citizens in the occupation of the territory acquired. On the one hand, it was contended that the United States Government ought not to permit the establishment of slavery in any region already free; on the other, it was urged that no discrimination should be made between settlers, and that the Southerner had as clear a right to carry his property with him, including his servants, as the Northerner had to take his tools and invested funds. The question came up in the Senate, as a matter of course; it was debated with great earnestness and no little feeling. General Dix's speech, June 26, 1848, on the establishment of a Territorial government in Oregon, deals princi-

* *See* foot-note on p. 214, vol. i., "Speeches and Addresses." See also Appendix, No. III., for a Project of a Treaty, by Albert Gallatin.

pally with that subject. The bill for establishing such a government expressly excluded slavery, by declaring all laws then existing in the Territory to be valid and operative; and one of those laws prohibited slavery and involuntary servitude otherwise than for the punishment of crimes whereof the party should be duly convicted. Mr. Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi, was among the Senators on the Southern side of the House who opposed the scheme. The bill passed, however, on the 12th of August ensuing, with the restrictions and prohibitions of slavery contained in the memorable ordinance of 1787. Again the question came before the Senate, when a bill was introduced embracing the whole subject of organizing governments for the Territories acquired from Mexico, the material point of disagreement being the question of permitting slavery to be established in those Territories. The Southern Senators insisted that citizens of the United States had the right, under the Constitution, to carry into those Territories whatever was recognized as property in the States from which they emigrated. The free States denied this doctrine, and insisted that, slavery having been abolished in Mexico, it could only be restored by positive enactment. But, to remove all doubt upon this point, it was contended that the acts organizing governments in those Territories should contain an absolute prohibition of slavery, in order to save the government from the reproach of re-establishing it where it had long been abolished by the fundamental law. General Dix, in addressing the Senate on this subject, took occasion to defend the State of New York from aspersions cast on her by Senator Butler, of South Carolina. In this speech, and in one delivered just a month before, may be found a full historical vindication of the course of the men who were equally opposed to external interference with slavery in the States in which it existed, and to its extension to territory where it did not exist. If a calm, critical, and dispassionate examination of the public records of the nation from the beginning, the statements of its founders, and the acts of its representative bodies can

prove anything, it shows this, that General Dix and those who acted with him truly represented the thought of our earliest statesmen on that subject, and vindicates them from the reproaches of extremists in both sections of the country. Throughout that exciting period, in which the skies grew stormier every day, their position, as stated by themselves, was as follows:

"1. All external interference with slavery in the States is a violation of the compromises of the Constitution, and dangerous to the harmony and perpetuity of the Federal Union.

"2. If territory is acquired by the United States, it should, in respect to slavery, be received as it is found. If slavery exists therein at the time of the acquisition, it should not be the subject of legislation by Congress. On the other hand, if slavery does not exist therein at the time of the acquisition, its introduction ought to be prohibited while the Territory continues to be governed as such.

"3. All legislation by Congress, in respect to slavery in the territory belonging to the United States, ceases to be operative when the inhabitants are permitted to form a State government; and the admission of a State into the Union carries with it, by force of the sovereignty such admission confers, the right to dispose of the whole question of slavery at its discretion, without external interference."

It was the determination of those men to resist interference with slavery in the States, as unauthorized and disorganizing, and at the same time to withhold assent to its extension under any pretext, and to oppose such extension in every constitutional mode, as of evil tendency in government, wrong in itself, and repugnant to humanity and civilization. They appear to have demonstrated that in this position they were in accord with the fathers of the Republic. The appeal to the representatives of the Southern people, with which the speech from which I have just quoted closes, will be read with profound interest, considering the contempt with which the solemn remonstrance was met:

"I do entreat our Southern friends earnestly, solemnly, not to press this measure upon us: I mean that of insisting on the right to carry slaves into New Mexico and California. I say to you in sincerity, and with the deepest conviction of the truth of what I say, that the Northern feeling can go no farther in this direction. I appeal to you, through the memory of the past, to do us the justice we have rendered you. You asked for Florida. You said it shut you out from the Gulf of Mexico. It was an inlet for political intrigue and social disorganization. It was necessary for your safety. We united with you to obtain it. Our blood, our treasure was freely shared with you in making the acquisition. We gave it up to you without reserve. You asked for Texas. It was said to be in danger of falling under the control of your commercial rivals. It was necessary for your safety. You said it would become a theatre for the intrigues of abolitionism. Your slave population might be endangered without it. We united with you again, and gave you back, by legislation and arms, what you had lost a quarter of a century before by diplomacy. We have now acquired free territory. We ask only that it may remain free. Do not ask us to unite with you in extending slavery to it. We abstain from all interference with slavery where it exists. We cannot sanction its extension, directly or indirectly, where it does not exist. And if the authority of the United States is exerted for this purpose—if slavery is carried into and established, as it will be by this bill, in the territory we have acquired—I am constrained to say—I say it in sorrow—the bond of confidence which unites the two sections of the Union will be rent asunder, and years of alienation and unkindness may intervene before it can be restored, if ever, in its wonted tenacity and strength. Not that I have any present fears for the integrity of the Union. I have not. It is capable of sustaining far ruder shocks than any possible settlement of this question can give. But what I fear is that the current of reciprocal kindness and confidence which runs through every portion of the community, pervad-

ing, refreshing, invigorating all, may be turned out of its course and forced into channels to which the common feeling is alien, and in which it may be converted into a fountain of bitterness and strife. I conjure you, then, to avoid all this. Ask us not to do what every principle we have been taught, and taught by your fathers, to venerate, condemns as unnatural and unjust."

Amid these painful discussions it is refreshing to turn to an address of a different character. I allude to the speech, made March 21, 1848, on a proposition to abolish the mission to the Papal States. This measure was opposed by the Senator from New York. His remarks were listened to with attention and interest, including as they did an account of the order and state of the Court of the Vatican, a summary of the history of the temporal power, and such a pleasant description of the Eternal City, its Campagna, and ancient port, as an accomplished classical scholar would be expected to give. Pope Pius IX. had but recently begun his reign; he was admired and honored as a prince of liberal views and progressive tendencies; it was in a spirit of great cordiality toward him, and of veneration for that branch of the Church of which he was the admired head, that this plea for a suitable representative near him was made; and the desired object was accomplished.

I omit particular mention of other speeches made about this time, such as that on the California claims, March 29, 1848; on the Yucatan bill, May 17, in the same year; and on trade with Canada, delivered several months later. It is time to proceed to the subject of the Free-soil movement in 1848.

Silas Wright was inaugurated Governor of the State of New York January 1, 1845. The reluctance with which he accepted that office was justified by the events which followed. His administration was embarrassed by a series of untoward occurrences, in consequence of which, notwithstanding

his abilities and honesty of purpose, he lost popularity. The anti-rent disturbances lost him the support of a part of the rural population, in consequence of the firmness with which he repressed the proceedings of the agrarians of that day, and maintained the cause of law and order in disaffected regions. His disapproval of the Canal Bill, though in accord with his well-known and unalterable convictions, alienated those who were in favor of large expenditure for internal improvements. More serious than either of these was the harm done by the quiet yet persistent opposition of the "Hunkers." Nor can it be doubted that the influence of the Government at Washington was thrown against him in that critical hour. Governor Marcy was Secretary of War; Samuel Nelson had just been appointed a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; Governor Bouck held one of the most influential offices in the city of New York—all these were members of that section of the party with which Governor Wright was not in sympathy. It was evident that he would be unable to maintain himself against an opposition of which the elements were so numerous, so varied, and so dangerous; and, accordingly, it occasioned little surprise among intelligent observers of public affairs when, in the autumn of 1846, he was defeated by a majority of nearly 12,000 votes.

Nothing can be imagined more admirable than the conduct of that great man under these trying circumstances. He returned at once to his beloved farm at Canton, and resumed, with apparent delight, the occupations of a rustic life. Visitors to that place have related how they found him at work in his fields, in the midst of his farm-hands, setting an example of industry and zeal which kept all about him up to their duty. His house was the shrine of many a pilgrimage; and, as profound regret at the loss of such a man from the helm of affairs and the councils of the State took the place of a less honorable sentiment, his popularity began to return. Already, as the time for the nomination of a President drew near, men were looking to him, as an illustrious representative of the

principles and hereditary faith of the Democratic Republican party, in whose hands the country would be safe, no matter from what quarter the tempest might come.

But it is not always possible for sinners to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, however earnestly disposed to do so, nor can the wrong and injustice done to noble citizens be always repaired. A higher power rules the affairs of states, and often cuts short the designs which men would fain carry into effect. The State Agricultural Fair was to be held at Saratoga Springs in the month of September, 1847; Mr. Wright had consented to deliver the customary address on that occasion. The work of preparation was completed on the evening of the 26th of August. At ten o'clock on the following morning he fell dead of disease of the heart. The news produced a profound impression. It was officially announced to the Legislature of the State; it was brought to the notice of the United States Senate. The city of Albany appointed the day for the funeral, and, with the honors appropriate to great men, what remained on earth of that venerable and patriotic citizen was consigned to its last resting-place.

The address which he had just completed was read at the opening of the Fair by General Dix, his faithful and devoted friend. Another duty in connection with that melancholy event devolved upon my father. Previous to Mr. Wright's death the merchants of the city of New York had ordered a magnificent service of plate to be presented to him in recognition of his eminent worth, and of the benefits resulting to the public from his official conduct and private and personal example. The workmen had not yet completed it when he died. It was thereupon determined to present it to his widow, which was done on the 18th of November. On that occasion Mr. John D. Van Buren made an address; and General Dix, on the part of Mrs. Wright, received in her name and acknowledged the splendid gift.

Thus ended, for this world at least, a friendship of many years. On me, as a youth, it made a deep impression. I well

remember the man in whom my father's faith was so strong, and to whom he was so warmly attached. Ever a welcome guest at our house, Mr. Wright was, when at a distance, in constant correspondence with us. I could appreciate the truth and sincerity of that friendship; I was too young to comprehend how great was the blow to my father and the men who stood with him when the standard-bearer of their cause and exponent of their deepest convictions was thus suddenly taken from them.

For now a critical movement was at hand, wherein no one knew what might occur. The next Presidential election was to be held in the autumn of 1848. The aggressive temper of the Southern statesmen, and their determination to extend if possible the area of slavery, had produced a deep uneasiness in many quarters, and in some directions a feeling of resentment and indignation. Evidently something formidable was in the air.

The trouble which resulted in the open rupture in the Democratic party in 1848 had been brewing for a long time. It seems probable that the administration helped to push matters to a crisis by its treatment of the Barnburners and its thinly disguised sympathy with their opponents. Very early in President Polk's administration it became evident how matters were likely to go. I have before me a letter addressed to General Dix, March 14, 1845, only ten days after the inauguration. Speaking of the New York appointments, and referring particularly to a person for whom the writer would have secured the favor and influence of the Senator, he adds:

"When I first heard of this, a month since, I thought there was much certainty of Mr. ——'s success. I did not anticipate at that time that the present administration at Washington was to be a mere elongation of the trading, time-serving, mongrel Tyler concern. I thought that President Polk would be desirous of having his administration stand out in *alto-rilievo*, separate from the past, and only provident of the good of the future. Recent appearances, however, give me other

forebodings. To my vision it is hardly in *basso-rilievo*. If the present and the future are to be a reproduction of the past, I do not desire that you should incur the humiliation for yourself or for me of asking anything for any friend of mine."

The use of the term "humiliation" in the preceding letter was apt, and amply justified by facts. General Dix, as representative of the State of New York in the Senate, and exponent of the old Democratic traditions, had a right to be heard on the subject of the appointments. But, though there was an apparent desire to oblige him and to defer to his wishes, yet it seems clear that he was wilfully and constantly deceived. Assurances were held out to him that Mr. Jonathan I. Coddington should be appointed Collector of the Port, that Mr. Flagg should go into the Treasury, and that Mr. Benton's plan of annexation should be adopted. Not one of these promises was fulfilled, nor is it likely that there was any intention of fulfilling them. The course pursued toward him was regarded as one of duplicity. My father, honest himself, relied on the honesty of other men, and on this occasion, as on others in the course of his life, allowed himself to be deceived. But his disgust and indignation were great when he discovered that he had been cheated. Among his letters are two addressed to President Polk, which express, in dignified terms, his sense of the arts practised at Washington, and imply that the government had broken faith with him and cajoled him by what looked like deliberate falsehoods. The sense of these wrongs burnt in the breasts of many of the old-line Democrats. Mr. Flagg, referring to the new cabinet, writes, March 5, in a somewhat desponding tone:

"The President will have a hard time in restoring the Subtreasury with agents who were opposed to it in 1837 and probably now. But we have learned to bear grief by being schooled in adversity; if the President gives us sound principles, we can get along."

But that was the question: whether the government would

be administered on sound principles. There is no doubt what the men of the school of Flagg, Wright, and Dix understood by those words. There is a paper, without date, but evidently written about this time; I transcribe it just as I find it, since it seems to be a summary of my father's political *credo.* It is endorsed by him "Democratic Points," and it runs as follows:

"1. A strict construction of the Constitution of the United States;

"2. Unyielding opposition, in every constitutional mode, to all encroachment on the reserved rights of the States;

"3. The receipt and disbursement of the revenue in gold and silver, and the custody of the public money without the agency of banks;

"4. The full and complete payment of the public debt at the earliest practicable day;

"5. Retrenchment in the public expenditure, and a rigid economy of our resources;

"6. A curtailment of the patronage of the Federal Government;

"7. A tariff for revenue, to defray the necessary expenses of the government;

"8. Appropriations of money from the public treasury for the improvement of rivers and harbors, to be confined to such as are general in their character; and no more than one new work to be provided for in the same bill;

"9. A graduation and reduction in the price of the public lands;

"10. No interference by Congress with slavery where it exists; and

"11. Absolute prohibition of slavery in the Territories of the United States where it does not exist."

This was their creed in those days; and this, according to their idea, was the old faith of the party to which they were devoted, and of which they were the consistent representatives.

Year by year matters grew worse, till the time came to nominate for the elections of 1848. That year is one of the most perplexing in American political history. A review of the steps successively taken with reference to the questions then agitating the country throws light on the position of General Dix in the Free-soil movement, and shows to what extent he approved of it, and at what point he lost confidence in it; for it is evident, from his correspondence, that he regarded it, in the form which it ultimately assumed, as a grave if not a fatal blunder, and would have withdrawn from it if he could have done so. The course of events may be traced by observing the conventions held about that time. These I shall note in order:

(*a*) The State Democratic Convention was held at Syracuse, September 29, 1847. Its session was stormy, lasting till October 3. Both sections of the party were represented. A split took place before the adjournment, owing to the refusal of the majority to adopt resolutions sustaining the Wilmot Proviso. The Hunkers retained the control; while the Barnburners announced their dissatisfaction with the proceedings, and their refusal to accept them as a true index of Democratic sentiment.

(*b*) The Barnburners, thus outnumbered at Syracuse, met soon after at Herkimer, and then adjourned, after making arrangements to hold a convention of their own in the month of February following.

(*c*) A convention was held at Albany, January 26, 1848. It was composed exclusively of the Hunker wing. It appointed a full delegation to represent the Democracy of the State of New York in the National Convention, which was to meet in May.

(*d*) The Barnburners next held a convention at Utica, February 16. They also appointed a full delegation to Baltimore, and claimed, as the Hunkers had done, to be the real Democracy of the State.

(*e*) The National Democratic Convention met at Baltimore,

May 24. Both of the New York delegations presented themselves, offered their credentials, and demanded seats. It was resolved to admit both, but on condition that the vote of the State should be divided between them. To this the Barnburners would not consent; they were farther irritated by the refusal of the convention to pledge the Democratic party and its candidates to resist the extension of slavery. They withdrew; and the convention, having nominated Lewis Cass of Michigan, and William O. Butler of Kentucky, adjourned.

The action of the National Democratic Convention was the signal for a violent agitation in the State of New York. On the reception of the news the Barnburners called meetings at Albany and New York, to express the feelings of the "Radical Democracy." At these meetings the proceedings at Baltimore were denounced; support to the nominations was refused, on the ground that the party had not been fully represented, and that the nominations were, in consequence, irregular; and it was declared that regular Democratic nominations had yet to be made. Under these circumstances another convention was called.

(*f*) It met at Utica on the 22d of June. It was composed exclusively of Democrats who were dissatisfied with the action of the National Convention, and hostile to its candidates. The question first to be settled was, what should be done; on that men differed greatly; some advising, or rather insisting, that new nominations should be made; others, more moderate in their views, considering that it would be unwise and inexpedient to proceed to a measure so extreme. This was the view of General Dix, and for it he was roundly abused by his excited friends; it was also the view of Mr. Van Buren, the most sagacious of Democratic leaders. But men of moderate counsels were overborne in the excitement of the hour, as may be seen in the following letter from Mr. Van Buren, from which it appears that his judgment was against the proposed action, and that he had been compelled to yield:

"Stuyvesant, June 20, 1848.

"My dear Sir,—In a private letter written by me to our friend Colonel Benton I intimated a concurrence with him and yourself in an opinion adverse to a national nomination at Utica, at the same time informing him that it was by no means certain that an opposite course would not be pursued. The exhibition of a desire to nominate has since appeared so universal with the Radical Democracy of the State, and the reasons assigned in favor of it so strong, as to satisfy me that I ought not to advise against it, and it is quite certain that a nomination will be made. Application has been made to me for permission to use my name, which I have declined to give, on the ground that I have long since retired from public life, with the tacit approbation of my friends, and I am resolved never again to be a candidate for public office. Finding a strong desire to nominate you, and a very great degree of sensibility upon the subject, it has occurred to me as possible, though not probable, that my letter to the Colonel, which he was authorized to show to you, might in some degree influence your opinion. I therefore write you this letter, which will, I understand, come to you in person, to communicate by telegraph with the Convention, if there should happen to be any ground for my apprehension.

"There is an unusual degree of animation in the Party, and I have no doubt that the Radical Democracy of this State will rally in favor of the Utica proceedings with great unanimity and power. With kind regards to Mrs. Dix,

"Very respectfully and truly yours, M. Van Buren.

"Genl. Jno. A. Dix."

The views of General Dix on the subject of separate nominations were well understood; he took no pains to conceal them; he disapproved of what his political friends were bent on doing; he declined to be the opposition candidate for the Presidency. But the convention represented a movement which could not be stopped at that hour; and the result was that they nominated Martin Van Buren, and Henry Dodge, of Wisconsin, as the candidates of "the Radical Democracy." Having accomplished this, the convention adjourned; but Mr. Dodge declined the nomination, and thus their work was left incomplete, and their design partially frustrated, as they remained without any candidate for the Vice-Presidency whom they would regard as having been regularly nominated.

This unfortunate and unexpected position must be borne in mind in connection with what followed.

Thus far the quarrel in the Democratic party was strictly a family dispute; no outsiders had as yet been drawn in, and therefore the alienation was not altogether hopeless.

A meeting was held at New York, July 18, to ratify the nominations of the Radical Democracy. General Dix was not present; he wrote a letter, however, giving his adhesion to the movement at the stage which it had then reached. It will be observed that he mentions Mr. Van Buren only, Mr. Dodge's name having been withdrawn:

"Washington, July 17, 1848.

"GENTLEMEN,—I received some days ago your favor of the 7th instant inviting me to attend and address a meeting of the Democracy of the city of New York in the Park, on the 18th instant, 'for the purpose of ratifying the nomination of Martin Van Buren for the Presidency, and of contributing to the extension of free soil and the perpetuation of free labor.'

"I have deferred answering your favor to the latest practicable moment from a desire to accept the invitation, if in my power, without neglecting my public duties. But I find it impossible. Important subjects of legislation press on both Houses of Congress; and I may at any moment be required to vote on some one of them.

"In respect to the great question on which so deep an interest is felt by yourselves and those you represent, I have so recently expressed my opinion in the most public manner that any farther annunciation of it would be superfluous. It accords entirely with your own; and much as I desire to see this distracting question settled, I cannot advocate or acquiesce in any adjustment by which slavery will be planted where it does not now exist.

"So long as there was a possibility of maintaining the integrity of the Democratic party in New York, without submitting to a sacrifice of principle, my efforts were directed, in every proper way, to the restoration of harmony. Events too clearly indicate the hopelessness of its reunion. Under such circumstances I cannot hesitate an instant as to the course of propriety and duty. From the Radical Democracy of New York I cannot separate; their principles and measures are those for the maintenance of which I have contended, side by side, with them in the political field from the moment I entered it. To introduce and preserve a

rigid economy in the public expenditure; to curtail the patronage of the Federal Government, or, in other words, to diffuse political power and not to centralize it; to liberate industry under all its forms from useless and oppressive restraints; to narrow the sphere of monopoly and exclusive privilege; to uphold the rights of free labor; to maintain with fidelity and good faith all the compromises of the Constitution, by abstaining from every species of interference with the domestic concerns and relations of the people of the States, and at the same time to resist the extension of slavery to those portions of the territory of the United States in which it does not exist, and especially where it is prohibited—these are the great issues presented by the position you have taken. I shall contribute my humble efforts to maintain it, satisfied as I am that the public honor and prosperity are alike involved in your success.

"I have never considered the Democracy of New York bound by the nominations at Baltimore. No portion of the Democracy of the Union can be committed to the support of proceedings in which it has had no part, or to a participation in which it has been admitted in such a manner as to deprive it of all influence upon the result. I have, therefore, deemed it a matter of entire discretion with the Radical Democracy of New York how far they should acquiesce in the proceedings referred to. They have deemed it due to their own rights to make a separate nomination, and thus to sustain their delegates in the firm, manly, and dignified course by which they disconnected themselves from the Baltimore Convention. That nomination I shall support, as the one best in accordance with the principles and issues I have alluded to, and the only one by which they can be fully vindicated.

"Of the talents, firmness, moderation, private worth, and public services of Mr. Van Buren, and his great experience in the affairs of government, no one can entertain a higher opinion than myself; and I shall give him my support, cheerfully and cordially, as the standard-bearer of the New York Democracy in a great contest for principle, and as a statesman who has graced every official position he has occupied in the service of his country, and none more than the highest.

"I am, very respectfully, your fellow-citizen,

"JOHN A. DIX.

"Messrs. JOHN COCHRAN,
EUGENE CASSERLY,
CLEMENT GUION,
JAMES PATTISON,
ISAAC V. FOWLER,
ANDREW CARRIGAIN,
GABRIEL HARRISON, } Committee."

I have already observed that the trouble in the Democratic camp amounted, thus far, to no more than a very angry domestic quarrel. In going with his old associates General Dix had done nothing inconsistent either with his political convictions or with his position as a life-long Democrat. But the time was at hand when "strangers and aliens" were to become involved in the dispute, making matters a hundred-fold worse.

(*g*) The next convention to be noted was that which met at Philadelphia, June 7. This was the National Convention of the Whig party. The question of slavery came up, as it had done in the National Democratic Convention, and again it led to a rupture, through the refusal of the majority to adopt resolutions against the extension of the peculiar institution of the South. General Taylor, "the hero of Buena Vista," was nominated for President, and Millard Fillmore of New York for Vice-President; but the nominations were disapproved by a portion of the party, and a secession took place.

(*h*) A convention next assembled at Buffalo. It was called by the seceders from the Whig National Convention, who were unwilling to support the Philadelphia candidates. Previously to this time the moderate Abolitionists, then styling themselves the "Liberty Party," had made their nominations; and it seems that at this juncture a scheme was set afoot to fuse, if possible, the Liberty Party, the Whig seceders, and the Democratic "Barnburners," so as to bring their united strength to bear in the approaching election. Into this ingeniously contrived trap some of the leaders of the "Radical Democracy" fell, and the result was seen in the formation of a new thing, the "Free-soil Party," composed of heterogeneous elements, and constituting a transition to something else which was to come of it in later years.

(*i*) A convention next assembled at Buffalo, August 9. This was the outcome of the scheme already referred to—a fusion convention, composed of all the elements that were

hostile to the extension of slavery. There were delegates from every free State, and also from Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia—these latter representing those who, though residing in slave-holding States, held the old views on the subject, and desired its peaceful and final extinction. Salmon P. Chase of Ohio was chosen presiding officer of that remarkable assemblage. Preston King, of the House of Representatives, John Van Buren, and Benjamin F. Butler of New York, prominent members of the Radical Democracy, were there; while Nathaniel Sawyer of Ohio, Governor Briggs, and Charles F. Adams of Massachusetts, represented the Whig party in its deliberations. Joshua R. Giddings and Frederick Douglass, abolitionists of the extreme type, struck hands with the rest, and added to the motley aspect of that incongruous assemblage. With a view to unite the largest possible number in support of the candidates to be brought forward, it was thought essential that they should be representatives of both the great parties; and as the Radical Democracy had already a candidate for the Presidency, but none for the Vice-Presidency, the course of the convention seemed clear. Martin Van Buren, the nominee of the New York malcontents, was nominated for the Presidency, and Charles Francis Adams of Massachusetts, an eminent Whig politician and statesman, for the Vice-Presidency. And then the convention adjourned.

It was a strange combination, that of a New York "Barnburner" and a Massachusetts "Conscience-Whig."*

(*k*) Finally, another convention was held at Utica, September 14. This, the last which I have occasion to mention, was actually a "Free-soil," or Democratic, Convention, but it united all the elements that had assisted at Buffalo on

* The love of grotesque names seems to be a passion in American politics. We read of "Buck-tails," "Barnburners," "Old Hunkers," "Conscience-Whigs," "Cotton-Whigs," "Silver Grays," "Loco-focos," "Copper heads," and now of "Stalwarts" and "Half-breeds."

the 9th of August. It ratified the nomination of Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Adams; it proceeded, farther, to nominate a candidate for the office of Governor of the State of New York. The choice fell on General Dix: he was unable to resist the pressure, and submitted to the misfortune which had thus overtaken him.

I have always felt great sympathy with my father in the trying position in which he was thus placed since I came to understand what it involved. He disapproved of the design of that section of the Democracy with whom he acted to make separate nominations, thinking it unwise and unnecessary, and foreseeing that it would increase the difficulty of bringing about a reconciliation. But he must have regarded with much greater concern the fusion of members of opposite parties who were divided on subjects regarded by him as of the utmost importance. That he, a Democrat of the old school, should find himself associated with gentlemen of the Whig party, from whom he differed on almost every point, whose political principles he had always opposed, and with whom he could never agree on questions of taxation, public works, finance, Constitutional interpretation, and State and national policy, was a painful and distressing surprise. He was willing, if it must be so, to go with his own section of the Democratic party, though deeming their course not the wisest. But when it came to alliance with Whigs and Abolitionists he lost all heart in the movement. This accounts for his strong expression in after-years on the subject of the fusion in 1848, for the indefatigable zeal with which he labored to bring about a reunion of his own people in 1852, and for his strenuous efforts to justify himself from the charge of being an Abolitionist and false to his old faith.

It will be asked, of course, why he yielded; and to this the reply is simple. He was caught in a torrent which he could not stem; he was also under personal and domestic influences which it was impossible for him to resist. Looking back to

those days, I frankly admit that I do not see how he could have resisted. I will throw what light I can on this part of his life. He was one of those men who are never influenced by passion, but follow the dictates of a sober judgment. He was very cautious; prudent, perhaps, in some things, to a fault; foresighted, wise. The rash enthusiasm which hurries men forward with little or no reflection, leading them more frequently to derisory failure than to brilliant success, was not in him. Though he had the temper of self-sacrifice in perfection, he was not the man to commit political suicide without a distinct intellectual impression that the cause was worth the price. Hence he failed his eager and excited friends in the earlier stage of their proceedings in 1848. He was vehemently urged, before the Convention of the 23d of June, to allow himself to be nominated for the Presidency. He was assured that nine-tenths of the Radical Democracy of the State were convinced of the expediency and propriety of making separate nominations, and that every hour strengthened their convictions on that point; that the nomination of Mr. Van Buren was out of the question; that the thoughts of men were turning more and more toward him; and that he must not withhold his consent to the use of his name. He was threatened with the consequences of failing to throw himself into the arena, and told that the man who would not "go with the masses in their triumphal progress would be trampled under foot." The letters of that date vary.* Some are calm and rational, but most of them are mere fire and fury. The writers seem to have looked for no immediate result beyond

* I refer to private letters which poured in at that time. There is one from Ward Hunt, of Utica, June 3; another from Bradford R. Wood, June 13; another from Benjamin F. Butler, June 16; another from T. M. Burt, of Kinderhook, June 20; and finally a notable one from myself, then a college student, in my twenty-first year. Of it I am now heartily ashamed, yet it shows the wild extravagance of the "Young America" of the day, as well as the feeling of the household in Bond Street.

the defeat of General Cass, whose name, apparently, was odious to them; yet the idea possessed them that the defeated candidate of 1848 would undoubtedly be victor in 1852.

No doubt General Dix saw through the cloud of deceptions thus raised, and perceived the end of these fond expectations. His reason could not have been convinced; nor was it possible to intimidate him by threats, as some attempted to do. But he was very closely bound to his political friends, and devoted to them; personal ties were even stronger than political, and he could not have broken off his intimate relations without great pain. Added to this, however, was the fact that Mr. Morgan, his father-in-law—to whom he was indebted for a constant sympathy, a generous assistance, and an affectionate devotion—was committed to the movement, and intensely interested, or rather violently excited, on the subject. Mr. Van Buren and Mr. Morgan were on terms of the closest intimacy; the ex-President and he were warm friends; while it was to Mr. Morgan that my father owed the means of releasing him from army life, of establishing him in his profession as a lawyer, of enabling him to maintain his family in comfort and ease while out of public office, and of innumerable advantages enjoyed by him in the varied experiences of his career. When all these circumstances are taken into consideration it will be better understood how hopelessly my father was involved in a movement which his judgment disapproved, and under what peculiar pressure he yielded to what must have sounded to him like the mandate of a dominant and irresistible fate. I see not how he could have done otherwise without the risk of trials from which a man of sensibility instinctively shrinks, and in which others more dear to him than himself are sure to become involved. The sentiments which actuated him were such as no good man need be ashamed of; the guiding motive was self-sacrifice.

The Southern politicians never forgave General Dix. For this I do not blame them; but they deserve censure for their systematic misrepresentation of his motives and his principles.

I may add that Northern men of the Democratic party, jealous of him, and determined to remove him from the field, were equally unscrupulous in their attacks on him based on his connection with the Free-soil movement. The policy of revenge was pursued with success, under administrations which trembled at the thought of losing the confidence of the slave-holding leaders and the vote of the South. Of this a striking illustration will be given in the proper place.

But let me leave this scene of strife and turn to more refreshing subjects. It was fortunate that, during the years of prolonged excitement and continuous labor in the Senate, General Dix found rest and refreshment in the summers spent at East Hampton, on Long Island. Reports of the charms of the climate and the rural beauty of the place induced him to go there. It was not easy at that time to reach the sequestered village. A tedious railroad took us to Greenport: there we were obliged to secure a couple of small sail-boats, one for ourselves, the other for the luggage; and in these we made a voyage of uncertain length round Shelter Island to Sag Harbor. Thence, by stage, we proceeded to the quaint and secluded settlement which was the object of our quest. It was well worth seeing. It has changed but little since that time; there is the same village street, a mile long, having at each end a windmill, a goose-pond, and a graveyard; there are the same brown, weather-beaten houses, shaded by rows of stately trees; but in the year 1846, when we first went there, its look was somewhat more venerable than it is now, as became what was almost a *terra incognita*. It was originally settled by people from Kent, in England, and at that time words and phrases were in use among the villagers and country folk which were heard nowhere else in the world save in Kent. The General passed his summers about a mile and a half from the village, at a house kept by an Englishman named Candy. The hamlet, still known as Appaquogue, consists of one or two dwellings at one end of Georgica Pond, a great sheet of water which, at its lower edge, almost touches the ocean, being divided from it

by a mere strip of sand beach. Every summer it was our custom to proceed, with spades and shovels, to that link between the fresh-water pond and the sea and cut a trench through it some five feet wide. When once the inland waters began to flow into this little canal it took but a short time to tear through the beach, and then they rushed with prodigious force, like a broad river, to the main, and the pond, disappearing, left in its place, for some four or five weeks, a broad expanse of sandy shallows and sedge. On these immense flocks of birds would alight on their passage westward; and there the General found ample field for his favorite pastime of gunning. There were few sportsmen in that region; he enjoyed a practical monopoly of the game, and his delight was immense. He spent his whole time, day after day and week after week, in the fresh, pure air, surrounded by his decoys, which he carved and painted with his own hand, and aided by us, his boys, whom he trained to love the open life and to help him in his work. He was an unerring shot; it was certain death to any bird to come within range of his piece.

The General added many years to his life by his habit of spending his summers in the open air, and wading about all day barefoot on the sand-flats and sea-beaches of the southern shore of Long Island. Thus he spent three or four successive summers near East Hampton. Later (in 1855) he went to Quogue, and passed six or seven seasons there; at last, in 1870, he purchased land at West Hampton, built a large house on it, and was a resident of the town of South Hampton, in the county of Suffolk, at the time of his death. He loved Long Island, its scenery, its climate, and its quiet, simple ways; he wished himself back there when away from it. Through the winter he made occasional visits to his place, "Seafield;" as soon as possible in the early summer he went thither, and left it late in the autumn, returning reluctantly to the city. This will not appear strange to any who have felt the fascination of that region of the Hamptons.

For I question whether there can be found on the Atlantic coast of America a summer climate so agreeable as that which one reaches by going some seventy miles eastward of New York on the Long Island Railroad. The prevailing summer wind along our seaboard is the south-west; but, as the coast trends from south-west to north-east, it is obvious that the south-west must be a hot wind along the shore, coming as it does from the torrid plains and bayous of the South. But that odd-looking, fish-shaped piece of outlying sea-beach, known on the maps as "Long Island," thrusts forth at a bold angle from the general line of the coast. Montauk Point is really about one hundred and thirty miles out at sea; and the breeze which blows from the heated land on the dwellers along the Jersey shore is a pure sea-breeze at the more fortunate Hamptons. The thermometer sometimes stands, with very slight variation, for weeks together at a pleasant summer heat, while the wind from the deep water fills the land with freshness, and at evening proves almost too cool. Such is the climate; the scenery is as peculiar in its way. As flat almost as Holland, the fields stretch to the low horizon, leaving a full dome of sky unbroken on its entire circle, save by the pine and oak forests inland, and, oceanward, by picturesque sand-dunes, which stand as nature's ramparts between us and the white surf on the beach. Nowhere else have I seen such skies, such thunder-storms, such sunsets, such auroras, such display of stars—the panorama of the heavens is shown on an absolutely unobstructed field. Nor, in the way of color, could the artist ask for aught more delicious than the varied greens of the great meadows of salt-grass, and the rustling mantle of the dunes, where the strong stalks of an incomprehensible vegetation whistle in the breeze, leaving us ever in doubt on what they thrive as they do. And out beyond lies the immeasurable sea, rolling to the far horizon and thence till its waters strike the other side of the world, and beating its incessant music on the white sand, with a roar which reminds me of nothing so much as the cadence of

the ancient Gregorian chanting which I have heard, swelling out and dying away, in the aisles of Santa Maria del Fiore at Florence, and in other churches of the Old World; a music of which some one well said, when hearing the objection that it had no *time*, and could not be counted off by bars: "Of course there is no time in it, for it is not the music of time, but of eternity."

It was the summer of 1848. Congress sat on and on, in the terrible heat at Washington, until at length the adjournment released those weary men and gave them a breathing-spell. With what eagerness my father hastened to his summer quarters at East Hampton may be imagined. The season was one of unusual interest to him in more ways than one. It was at that time that his eldest son, having completed the course at Columbia College, in the city of New York, was graduated from that venerable institution by the President, Nathaniel F. Moore, one of the most accomplished scholars and gentlemen that ever filled that post. The commencement exercises were held in a dismal and ugly Methodist meeting-house in Greene Street, near Grand, wherein were gathered many of the *élite* of the day; and strange was the contrast between the dingy edifice and the radiant hues of the beauty and fashion which then, perhaps for the first and last time, lit up its dust and dimness. It fell to my lot, by the rule of the college, to deliver the Greek salutatory—an honor which brought care with it, as most honors do; yet I found a certain satisfaction on that occasion in describing to the audience, in a tongue to them unknown, the absurdity of their appearance as they sat listening, with an air of interest and an affectation of intelligence, to a discourse of which it was impossible for one of them to gather the purport. Professor Charles Anthon, the official critic of the Greek and Latin oratory, smiled grimly as he read my manuscript, but kindly permitted me to give it as it stood, quite sure that few, if any, of the audience would be the wiser.

Among the companions of that summer at East Hampton

—the last we spent there—was Colonel Dix. He had received his brevet for gallant and meritorious conduct at the battle of Buena Vista, in which bloody engagement he served as extra aide-de-camp to General Taylor, as his letters, already given, relate. We never saw him again. He died of cholera, on the 7th day of January following, at Wheeling, while crossing the Alleghany Mountains, on his way to Washington.

The summer passed by and the autumn came on. The month of September brought with it the unwelcome nomination to the office of Governor of the State. The General submitted to the inevitable. I give the correspondence on the subject between the Committee of the Convention at Utica and himself:

"Utica, September 14, 1848.

"Hon. JOHN A. DIX:

"In behalf of the Free-soil Democratic Convention of the State of New York, now in session here, whose Committee we are for that purpose, we would respectfully communicate to you that said Convention have, by acclamation, nominated you, as the candidate of the free Democracy of the State of New York, for the office of Governor, and ask your acceptance thereof.

"Your unyielding advocacy of human freedom, efficient opposition to the extension of slavery over the Territories, in the United States Senate, and long, faithful public services, have emphatically pointed you out as the man upon whom the hearts of the virtuous and the good concentrate, and around whom the Democracy cluster, as most worthy to be their standard-bearer in the contest for free soil, free labor, free men, and free speech, with New York's favorite son, Martin Van Buren; and your acceptance will be hailed by thousands as a sure harbinger of victory.

"Yours we are, very respectfully,

"EDGAR C. DIBBLE,
R. P. WISNER,
HENRY B. STANTON,
H. W. SAGE,
G. A. GRANT."

"East Hampton, September 21, 1848.

"GENTLEMEN,—On my return to this place last evening, after an absence of a few days, I found your favor of the 14th inst., informing me of my nomination for the office of Governor of this State by the Free-soil

Democratic Convention, then in session at Utica. This communication was entirely unexpected, no intimation having been made to me, from any quarter, that the intention of putting me in nomination for that high and responsible trust was entertained. If I had been apprised of it I should have endeavored to satisfy the political friends who have thus honored me with their confidence that the great interests at stake would have been better promoted by conferring the nomination on some one more worthy to receive it than myself. But, as it has been their pleasure to act without consultation with me, I submit myself to their better judgment by responding with cheerfulness and promptitude to their call. Holding an office under the authority of the State, I acknowledge the right of those who were chiefly instrumental in conferring it on me to nominate me for any other whenever they think proper to do so; and I deem it my duty to accede to their wishes without regard to my own.

"Whatever objection, arising from considerations personal to myself, I might have, under ordinary circumstances, to a nomination for an office the honor of which no one appreciates more highly than I do, all such objection is outweighed by the public considerations in view of which it is now presented to me. The State of New York, though not the first, was among the earliest of the thirteen States which have, through legislative instructions to their Senators and Representatives in Congress, declared themselves opposed to the farther extension of slavery. Her resolutions were presented to the Senate of the United States in the early part of February, 1847, and during the same month I supported them in that body to the best of my ability in a speech setting forth at large the grounds on which New York and her associates, then eleven in number, among the free States, had placed themselves in opposition to the extension of slavery into Territories in which it does not exist. I also endeavored to show that this course, which they deemed enjoined upon them by the highest considerations of patriotism and humanity, was in strict accordance with all their obligations and duties to their sister States. These positions I have labored to defend, whenever practical questions involving them have come before the Senate, in a manner which, while it did full justice to the States assuming them, could not reasonably be complained of as offensive to those who differed with us in opinion. Regarding the nomination which has been conferred on me as an approval of this part of my public service in the Senate, it is received as a gratifying token of the confidence of those you represent. And now, when the ground in favor of freedom in the Territories, assumed by thirteen of the sovereign States of the Union (and one of them a slave-holding State), is both openly and covertly assailed—the ground taken more than half a century ago by Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison,

Mason, Randolph, Hancock, Adams, and others among the founders of the Republic—as the use of my name has been deemed material to sustain the position of New York in respect to a principle, on the maintenance of which the honor and the prosperity of the country depend, it is, on my part, freely yielded, though with the apprehension that undue importance may have been attached to it.

"With my thanks for the kind manner in which the result of the proceedings of the Convention has been communicated to me, I am, Gentlemen, very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN A. DIX.

"Messrs. EDGAR C. DIBBLE,
R. P. WISNER,
HENRY B. STANTON,
G. A. GRANT,
H. W. SAGE,
} Committee."

The result of the fall elections was what General Dix had expected. The Free-soil candidates were defeated: Mr. Van Buren did not receive a single electoral vote. General Taylor became President; Hamilton Fish, Governor of New York. The official canvass shows the feeling of the people of this State as expressed by their ballots. I give it below.*

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* The *Albany Argus* gives the aggregate of the official vote for Governor in all the counties of the State, which we compare with the vote for Presidential electors, as follows:

Governor.		*President.*	
Fish	218,616	Taylor	218,551
Walworth	116,019	Cass	114,592
Dix	122,583	Van Buren	120,519
Total	457,218	Total	453,662

Excess of votes for Governor, exclusive of scattering votes, 3526, viz.:

Fish, more than Taylor	65
Walworth, more than Cass	1,427
Dix, more than Van Buren	2,064
Total	3,556

Fish's plurality over Walworth, 102,597; over Dix, 96,033; Walworth and Dix over Fish, 19,986. It should be observed that Mr. Dix received about 3500 anti-rent votes, which were withheld from Mr. Fish.

I spent the winter of 1848–'49 in Washington. It was my father's last year in the Senate. His residence was on C Street; Colonel Benton, his intimate personal friend, was his near neighbor, but two or three houses away. Opposite us lived Senator Bagley, and near him Mr. Philip Barton Key and his beautiful wife. Nothing could be more delightful than the society of Washington at that time to one able to enjoy the lazy, listless, easy existence led by the families of prominent officials or pleasure-seekers at the capital. There was, and probably still is, a certain indefinable charm in the place, due in part to temperate climate and agreeable air, and in part to the intermingling of cultivated persons from all parts of our country, officers in the military and naval service, and a select foreign society in the Diplomatic Corps. President Polk and his very agreeable wife were at the White House. The Vice-President, Mr. George M. Dallas, was a picture to look upon, tall and commanding, with snowy white hair, a florid visage, and aristocratic bearing. On the square, not far from the Executive Mansion, the venerable Mrs. Madison held her court, conspicuous for her antiquated costume, her spotless turban, and her rigid observance of the manners of the olden time. Next door to her lived my father's old friend, Benjamin Ogle Tayloe, occupying one of those ample and comfortable houses wherein one feels instantly at home. The families of General Totten, of the Engineers, Commodore Morris, of the navy, and other officers, were represented at the balls and receptions by lovely young women in the full bloom of their charms. M. de Bodisco was Russian Minister; his wife, an American lady, celebrated not less for her beauty than for her virtues. Colonel Benton's daughter Jessie, the young wife of the brilliant soldier Fremont, himself a kind of idol among us at that day, shone radiantly in the galaxy.

I remember the picturesque mansion "Kalorama," which overlooked the city from a wooded ridge; and "Arlington;" and the *fêtes* given in those and other stately houses, destined, alas! in time to put off their glory and gather up grime and

gloom in the years of the Civil War. I recollect a long drive to Mount Vernon over an intolerable corduroy road; our cordial reception by Mr. Washington, and the dinner to which I was hospitably invited, with other guests. That winter was full of excitement and interest. One administration was preparing its departure, another was coming; the city was agog with leave-takings and welcomes. Gruff old Zachary Taylor was coming in March; and a ball was in preparation to relieve the official severities of the Inauguration with a background of gleaming dresses, and a whirl of mazy dances, and music and revelry. These things go on, no doubt, to-day, as they have ever gone, though the actors change and vanish, and one generation passes away and another takes its place; and we, who see them in the far past, greet the image of those vanished hours and are glad of the brief pleasures tasted in this care-burdened life.

With the ending of that administration came also the end of my father's service in the Senate. His last speech was made February 28, 1849, three days before the adjournment of Congress. The question before the Senate, presented in a variety of forms, was the institution of governments for the Territories recently acquired from Mexico, a question embarrassed throughout by the determination of the Senators from the slave States to extend slavery to those Territories, and by a majority of the Senators from the free States to guard, by an express prohibition, against what they deemed a moral and political evil, and the national dishonor of restoring it where it had been formally abolished.

General Dix's argument was against the proposed admission of California and New Mexico into the Union as a State, and against the conferring of extraordinary powers upon the President to govern them as a Territory. He regarded them as wholly unfit in their actual condition to be taken into the Union with the rights and powers of States; he also considered the proposition to arm the President with despotic powers as utterly indefensible: his wish was that Territorial gov-

ernments should be organized for California and New Mexico, and that the act establishing such governments should contain a prohibition of slavery. The speech gives a brief and interesting summary of the history of slavery in the American Colonies and the United States, from the year 1620 down to 1808, when the slave-trade was abolished by Congress. The views of General Dix upon the subject are presented with a force and clearness which ought to have rendered it impossible to mistake his position. By way of an appropriate conclusion to this review of his services in the Senate, I give, in full, the peroration of this his last address to that distinguished body. Having completed his argument, he brought his remarks to an end in these words:

"Mr. President, two years ago, when I first addressed the Senate upon this subject, under the instructions of the State of New York, I said that by no instrumentality of hers should slavery be carried into any portion of this continent which is free. I repeat the declaration now: by no act, by no acquiescence of hers, shall slavery be carried where it does not exist. I said, at the same time, that in whatever manner the question should be settled, if it should be decided against her views of justice and right, her devotion to the Union and to her sister States should remain unshaken and unimpaired. Speaking in her name, and for the last time within these walls, I repeat this declaration also. She does not believe in the possibility of disunion. I am thankful that her faith is also mine. My confidence is founded upon the disinterestedness of the great body of the people who derive their subsistence from the soil, and whose attachment is strong in proportion to their close communion with it. They have incorporated with it the labor of their own hands. It has given them back wealth and health and strength—health to enjoy and strength to defend what they possess. In seasons of tranquillity and peace they are unseen—too often, perhaps, forgotten; but it is in their silent and sober toil that the public prosperity is

wrought out. It is only in the hour of peril that they come forth from a thousand hills and valleys and plains to sustain with strong arms the country they have made prosperous. In them the Union will find its surest protectors. They are too virtuous and too independent to be corrupted. They are spread over too broad a surface for the work of seduction. It is in towns and public assemblies, where men are concentrated, that the tempter can with more assurance sit down, as of old, in the guise of friendship and whisper into the unsuspecting or the willing ear the lesson of disobedience and treachery. From this danger the great body of the people are secure. And let us be assured that they will never permit the banner which floats over them at home, and carries their name to every sea, to be torn down either by internal dissension or external violence. Such is my firm, my unalterable conviction. But, if I am mistaken in all this—if the spangled field it bears aloft is destined to be broken up—then my prayer will be, that the star which represents New York in the constellation of States may stand fixed until every other shall have fallen."

On the breaking up of his home in Washington, General Dix had to consider, first of all, the question of a future residence. His preference was for Long Island; but that region of delicious climate and fine shooting was too far away. The North River was considered hot and, perhaps, unhealthy. He disliked cities in general, and the city of New York in particular, and wished, above all, a country home. After much deliberation he fixed on Westchester County, and, desiring to be near the salt-water, rented a house not far from the village of Port Chester. Thither he took us early in the summer of 1849. Mr. Morgan's health was greatly impaired; he was not able to make the usual journey to his much-loved place in Madison County, and it was decided that he should pass the summer with his son-in-law and daughter. The General writes thus to an old friend:

"Since the adjournment of Congress I have been incessant-

ly engaged in the most annoying and unsatisfactory of all occupations, packing up books and furniture in Washington, unpacking them here, and putting a house in order, rather for the purpose of an encampment than a permanent residence; for, not being able to find a place I like well enough to buy, I have only hired, and therefore feel that my connection with the ancient Sawpit (the modern Port Chester) may at any time be dissolved. But I am looking out for a place in this neighborhood which I can fancy well enough for a future residence, though I have still a hankering after Long Island."

In fact, that summer sojourn at Port Chester led ultimately to the purchase of an island in the Sound, near the village of Rye, on which my father built a house, intending to make it his permanent residence. The island was bought in 1850; the house was finished and occupied in the spring of 1852; but owing to a series of painful circumstances it never became our home.

The summer of 1849 was noted for the ravages of the cholera; my uncle, Lieutenant-colonel Dix, died of that horrible disease early in the year. Great alarm was felt through the country. We were all put on a strict regimen of roast beef and rice, and lived in constant dread lest it should spread from the city where it was raging to the country. My brother Baldwin, next in age to me, was to have graduated from Columbia College in June; but the Commencement was postponed till the month of October, in consequence of the epidemic.

But though we escaped the dreaded malady, yet the shadow of death fell on our house. Ere the summer was over Mr. Morgan was taken from us. He died in the hired house at Port Chester, July 29, 1849. His decease made a change in General Dix's plans, who reluctantly became a resident of the city of New York. The summers, however, he still passed on the shores of Long Island Sound—that of the year 1850 at a house near Rye, close to the water-side; that of 1851 at a house still nearer the village, which overlooked a pretty mill-

pond and a picturesque mill, and commanded a view of Manursing Island, a light-house farther off, and the shores of Long Island nine miles distant across that expanse of water which rolls stately between the bold coasts and out toward the open sea. It was Manursing Island which my father bought, and there he built his house. One of his chief amusements was that of planning houses: he would have made an enthusiastic architect, had that been his profession. I remember three at least that he built: one at Albany, one on Manursing Island, and, finally, one at Seafield. All these he designed with the greatest care, drawing the plans, making the specifications, and superintending the construction.

In this design of making a country home on Manursing Island he was ardently seconded by my brother Baldwin. Dear, noble youth! cut off untimely at the entrance on manhood! Amid what tears did he go away to his long home! What hopes were buried with him in the narrow vault in Trinity Church-yard! After nearly thirty years my hand trembles as I write; my eyes are dim looking back. He was a high-spirited, generous fellow; pure, true, honorable; beloved by his companions. He graduated the year that his father left the Senate. He studied law, and was admitted to the Bar in 1851. He was fond of country life, a fine shot, a good boatman. My father had a little sail-boat, a schooner, the *White Eagle*. He took us out in it, managing it himself, with our help, and teaching us how to sail it. We passed half our time on the water, and many a night did we spend, becalmed under the lee of the land at Cold Spring Harbor or Oyster Bay, when the stiff breeze had died away from us and we could not get back. We always went on our expeditions provided for that emergency. My brother delighted in the water, and was never happier than when the *White Eagle* spread her wings to the currents of air that rushed deliciously up or down the Sound.

And thus we lived our life: in town during the winter, at Rye all summer; and we saw the house rising on the island,

and all had some suggestion to make to the dear chief-architect, who duly considered all reasonable wishes, and among them this—that a little chapel, or oratory, should be attached to the house, forming a kind of wing to the east. To complete the arrangements for occupation of the island, it was necessary to have a bridge built connecting it with the mainland, and desirable that the proprietor of the island should also be the owner of a mass of rock and earth covered with fine trees, and known as "the Hammocks," which projected from the coast-line, and must be traversed before reaching the bridge. To get possession of the Hammocks was impossible without propitiating their owner, an ancient inhabitant residing at Rye Neck, and rejoicing in the appellation of Billa Theall; for the bridge an act of the Legislature was required. An expedition was undertaken by the General to accomplish both those objects. He wrote an account of it for the entertainment of our domestic circle, addressing it to my youngest sister, then a little bit of a girl and the baby of the family.

"A CHAPTER IN MR. DICKENS'S PRIVATE HISTORY: DEDICATED TO HIS DAUGHTER KITTY.

"I. *Mr. Dickens sets out on a Visit to the Seat of Government.*

"On Tuesday morning Mr. Dickens, in company with his friend Captain B——, after a hearty breakfast of buckwheat cakes and sausages, got on board the railroad cars, and in fifty-five minutes they were landed at the village of Rye. Leaving the train, they proceeded to the house of Billa Theall. Tommy was, luckily, down on Rye Neck foddering cattle; and the old gentleman, as he had promised, signed the paper and took the money. When the gold was all counted out and piled up on the table Mr. Dickens asked the old gentleman if it didn't look pretty, to which he answered that it did—'very pretty;' and his eyes glistened as he said it. Mr. Dickens and his friend

then went on to St. John's;* and having an hour of leisure, Mr. Dickens took the Captain's gunning punt, with black John to row, and started for the Hammocks. Just as they were pushing off, Billy Dixon, the water-spaniel, made a leap for the boat, but falling short, he went over head and ears into the water. Mr. Dickens, pitying his condition, took him in and set him on the bow, and they proceeded thus:

"After a pleasant row around the Hammocks, which looked, like Billa Theall's gold, with which they were purchased, 'very pretty,' Mr. Dickens returned to St. John's, dined on boiled pork and salt beef, went to Port Chester, got into the cars, and rode to Bridgeport, where he arrived at seven o'clock.

"II. *How Mr. Dickens passed himself off among the Yankee Girls for a Bachelor.*

"After taking a cup of tea at Bridgeport, Mr. Dickens sat down in the bar-room—the only sitting-room in the hotel—and, having nothing to do, grew melancholy. He looked at all the pictures in the room—a very bad view of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, a sailor loading a cannon, and a pack of hounds catching a fox; and having finished, he was thinking of going to bed in despair, when a man came in and said there was a fair in the Methodist Church. Mr. Dickens was inspired with new life; he put on his overcoat, walked into the street, and, meeting a little negro girl, he gave her a sixpence to show him the way to the Methodist Church. It was full of tables covered with beautiful things, which young ladies were selling to visitors. Mr. Dickens, after walking two or three times around the church, went up to a table, and, addressing himself to one of the young ladies who were attending it, he said, 'Miss, have you any bachelor's needle-cases?' The young lady replied, 'I don't know what they are.' Mr. Dickens said, 'Any needle-case will do which is suited to a

* He was the owner of the house which we occupied while the island home was in preparation.

gentleman that has to do his own sewing.' The young lady then handed him two—one in the shape of a diamond, and the other in the shape of a heart. Mr. Dickens immediately seized upon the heart and said, 'Ah! this is exactly suited to my case.' 'I am very sorry,' said the young lady, 'but that one is sold; won't you take the other, sir? it is equally good.' Whereupon Mr. Dickens rejoined, 'It may be equally good, miss, but 'tis not half so expressive. Still, if I can't have your heart, I'll console myself with your diamond.' Thereupon all the Yankee girls exchanged glances and laughed, and Mr. Dickens retired to the hotel with a burden off his spirits and fifty cents out of pocket.

"III. *How Mr. Dickens takes to Early Rising.*

"The next morning, before it was quite light, Mr. Dickens was awoke by the ringing of a bell at his door, and the next minute the waiter came in and asked for his boots. 'What bell is that?' said Mr. Dickens. 'The breakfast-bell,' said the waiter. 'How long to breakfast?' said Mr. Dickens. 'Fifteen minutes,' said the waiter. 'Good gracious!' said Mr. Dickens; 'what o'clock is it?' 'Half-past six,' said the waiter. 'Have you no late breakfast?' said Mr. Dickens. 'No, *sir*,' said the waiter. 'And shall I lose my breakfast if I don't get up?' said Mr. Dickens. 'I'm afraid you will,' said the waiter. 'Well, then,' said Mr. Dickens, 'I'm afraid I shall have to get up.' Accordingly Mr. Dickens resolved to go down to breakfast and 'turn over a new leaf.' The sun rose about the time Mr. Dickens took his breakfast, and he remarked to a gentleman at table what a blessed thing it was to get up early in the morning, and that he could never wonder sufficiently how some people would lie in bed.

"IV. *How Mr. Dickens Ran off the Track.*

"After breakfast Mr. Dickens took the cars for Albany, and when he had gone about twenty miles found the country covered with snow. The day was cold, but the weather

was very fine, and the journey was very pleasant. The train had reached Schodack—about eight miles from Albany—and it was a quarter before five, and he was congratulating himself that he would be there in fifteen minutes, as it was all the way down-hill, when suddenly the bell rang, the steam-whistle screeched; he felt the engine making a great effort to hold back, and in an instant the train stopped so suddenly that he was almost thrown off his seat. Mr. Dickens ran to the door, and the following spectacle presented itself: The engine was half-buried in a sand-bank, and the tender and baggage-car were entirely off the track. Fortunately, the Boston train came on in an hour, and after a delay of four hours Mr. Dickens arrived safely in Albany at nine o'clock.

"The next day Mr. Dickens went to the Assembly Chamber, and was hardly seated when the clerk began to read 'An act to authorize John A. Dix to build a bridge,' whereupon he cut, and walked over to the Senate Chamber. He afterward understood the bill passed by ninety-five votes to one, and the man who was in the negative voted by mistake; whereupon Mr. Dickens went to see the Governor and Mrs. Fish, and Mrs. Fonday and many other friends, and retired to his room in the evening to give an account of himself to his dear little Kitty; and he begs she will kiss grandma and mother and all her brothers and sisters for him, and let them know how he is getting on.

"Thursday evening, January 31, 1850.

"Mr. Dickens intends to write to Kitty's mother to-morrow."

So the years passed by, and the house was finished, and it was all that each would have had it, and the summer of the year 1852 should have seen us there, happy and content. But ere the summer days arrived the joy and light were fled. We were all in mourning, for the heaviest blow yet dealt upon our house had fallen with fatal effect. My dear brother, just admitted to the Bar, industrious and ambitious to learn,

made it a part of his duty to watch important cases in their progress, and frequently spent many hours of the day in the unwholesome atmosphere of court-rooms. It was also his habit to sit up late into the night in his study reading hard, and more than once forgetting that his fire had gone out. Early in January, 1852, he was taken ill. We thought the attack of little importance; but he said to me one day, "I shall never get up again." The prophecy was fulfilled: in three weeks he was dead, of typhoid fever; and on the Feast of the Purification, February 2, we followed his body, like persons stunned, to its long home in the family vault in Trinity Church-yard.

No one but themselves can ever know what that loss was to his father and mother. The scars of such wounds are there for life: each anniversary renews the pain.

In due time they went to Manursing Island. It was the first summer there. A cloud seemed to rest on the place; it never lifted; it grew deeper. My eldest sister was taken very ill; my grandmother, Mrs. Morgan, already three years a widow, was also a great sufferer that summer; her mind appeared to be weakened, and her constitution was evidently giving way. No pleasant memories are in that retrospect—so much had been anticipated, so little was found to enjoy! We felt, one and all, that the place could never be the home for which we longed. And, strangely enough, other circumstances were at work to break up our plans and give the family history another and a complete change.

During the administration of General Taylor and of Mr. Fillmore—who, upon the lamented death of the President, July 9, 1850, took his place—General Dix took great interest in movements in which, however, he was debarred from bearing an official part. Convinced that a great blunder had been committed in breaking up the Democratic organization, it was his earnest wish that the party should, if possible, be thoroughly united once more. This is the subject of the correspondence of those years: the importance of reunion, the diffi-

culty of mediating between the "Hunkers," as they continued to be called, who had supported Mr. Cass, and the "Barnburners," who had seceded under the standard of Mr. Van Buren. He had no active part in the government, though constantly consulted by men in official position; his advice was asked on great public questions; he appeared at meetings and addressed them; at one held at Herkimer, July 13, 1850, he was the principal speaker. His attitude toward the propagandists of slavery remained the same; their dislike of him increased. Fear lest he should again be called to public life, jealousy of him as still a dangerous rival in the political field, appear to have influenced the leaders of that portion of the Democracy who desired to conciliate the South, and depended on Southern influence for their own advancement. Regardless of these unfriendly and ungenerous sentiments, he kept on his way, laboring for the restoration of unity, convinced of the ultimate triumph of free principles, desirous that the Democratic party should have the honor and prestige of the final victory; while the men who desired to control the party, unable or unwilling to forget the events of 1848, and convinced that Democratic success could only be secured by the help of the slave-holding interest, were resolved that, by any and all means, General Dix must be kept from ever coming back into public life.

The defeat of the Democratic party in 1848 was the result of the Free-soil schism: to restore it to its old supremacy, and secure a triumph in 1852, was the problem presented to the leading men of its several sections. To reunite the party was the condition necessary to success; but that was no easy thing. Taking the whole country through, men were distributed somewhat as follows:

1st. The South so far substantially united as to be unwilling to support any one not favorably known to it; yet even there divisions were apparent, for the movement toward secession had already begun, and on that question men were divided as States-rights Democrats and Union-Democrats.

2d. The Whig party at the North, representing all elements

hostile to Southern aims and policy, and destined to develop into the Republican party.

3d. The Northern Democrats, including the Free-soil section, who had revolted in 1848, and the Hunker section, who had acted with the pro-slavery Democrats of the South in the same year.

4th. The "Liberty party," the Conscience-Whigs, and the advanced Abolitionists.

The Whig victory in 1848 was a victory over a combination of the united South and a portion of the Democratic party of the North. To defeat the Whigs in 1852 the Democrats must be one again. The Free-soilers, therefore, held the balance of power, and it depended on them whether the next President should be a Democrat or a Whig.

Two classes of men were hostile to reunion with the Free-soilers: the extreme Southern Democrats, and those at the North who relied for success on a close alliance with them. The Southern leaders of the radical type detested all who had taken part in the Free-soil movement, reproached them for the past, and mistrusted them as to the future. Moreover, the programme of forcible secession had been by that time arranged, and plotters of that conspiracy knew that the old Free-soil Democrats, whatever concessions they might make on other points, would be sure to resist them in that nefarious design. On these and other accounts the embryo Secessionists desired no reconciliation with their Free-soil brethren. A similar unwillingness to forget the past and come together was exhibited by the Hunker Democrats, but on different grounds. They wished no rivals, expecting, with the help of the South, to recover and retain the supremacy in their own part of the country. The Free-soil Democrats would, no doubt, have been kept out in the cold had it been deemed safe to throw them off. But this course was abandoned in dread of another defeat. Meanwhile the old leaders of the Free-soil movement engaged in strenuous efforts to bring about a thorough and cordial reunion. Accused of selfish

motives in this particular, they earnestly repelled the charge. As to General Dix, the very active part which he took in those efforts was due, as I think, to several causes, each creditable to his patriotism and good-sense. His disapproval of the fusion of 1848 had been justified by results. A life-long opponent of abolitionism, he had maintained uniformly and consistently that slavery ought not to be interfered with where it existed; he could not, therefore, act either with Northern Abolitionists or with the members of any party which made interference with slavery an article of its platform. A Democrat of the old school, and a believer in the Democratic creed, he was convinced that the principles of the party were sound, and that it was to the interest of the nation that they should be the rule of public and political action. The question of the extension of slavery he regarded as settled, on terms which he thought sound and just. But beyond and above all these reasons there was another on which I must henceforth lay stress in connection with his history up to the beginning of the war. Although he detested slavery, he hated one thing worse, disunion. That, and not slavery, was rapidly becoming the leading issue; and to prevent that he saw that the principles of the Jacksonian Democracy must be revived and asserted. It mattered very little what might be done or said about slavery in comparison with a deeper and graver question now taking the precedence of all others, whether the Union of the States could be preserved; and he thought that the ascendency of the Democratic party was essential to that end. He therefore threw himself with earnestness into the political contest. There was no longer any reason why he should not cordially and heartily act with his party. It was, as I believe, with a clear conscience, and in a broad and statesman-like spirit, that he addressed himself to the work which appeared to him most important. Without the aid of New York it would be impossible to elect a Democratic President in 1852. The State of New York could not be carried unless the two sections of the Democracy in that

State could be reconciled. To use the words of the Hon. Preston King, in a letter to General Dix, January 1, 1851, the effort now was, "to consolidate all the sides of the real Democracy in a homogeneous party, friendly to freedom, in New York," believing as they did that "no other kind of party could live."

It must be admitted that the men had undertaken a very difficult work. Prejudices were to be met, opposition was to be overcome, both North and South. The question, of course, was already complicated by personal considerations. The South were divided on the subject of the most available candidate. Mr. Cass, Mr. Buchanan, and Mr. Dickinson, of the Senate, had been mentioned; Colonel Benton, General Houston, and Mr. Woodbury. Of these men, it was certain that Mr. Dickinson could not carry New York; that Colonel Benton could not carry the Southern vote; that the nomination of General Houston was impossible: still, each of these men was pressed by his friends. The impression among many Southern Democrats was that New York was hopeless under any circumstances, and that the best policy was to put the Free-soilers of that State under the ban, and try to carry the election without their help. Even among Southern men favorable to freedom there was great doubt as to the course to be pursued. One of them—a politician of great influence and sagacity—wrote as follows to General Dix from his house near Washington, March 21, 1851, presenting a dilemma, and uncertain which horn to choose:

"In a letter in reply to —— I gave my views at large as to the course our Free-soil Democrats should take in the present state of politics. I will try to find the copy, and send it to you; I cannot now lay my hands on it. The conclusion I come to is this: that we must either run a Radical Free-soil Democrat and nail his flag to our mast, and sink or swim with it through our sea of troubles, or take some man who can break up the Hunker coalition, and who, if elected, must take our complexion from stress of circumstances. My

plan was for the boldest course: to take Benton, and brave and beard all Hunkerdom, North and South. Benton refusing, I was for taking the same course, with you, or John Van Buren, or Preston King for our leader. Benton's policy is opposed to what he calls killing off our good men by running them at an unpopular moment, when, Free-soilers having carried their point in the Territories, the disaffection in the South would enable the Northern Hunkers to break them down by the cry of danger to the Union. I shall go with our Free-soil branch of the party, if they determine to stake upon the force of their principles. If this be considered a forlorn-hope under present circumstances, then I think Benton's plan of running Woodbury our best chance."

About this time a prominent Free-soil politician visited Washington on a tour of inspection. His report, in a letter to General Dix, of what he saw there throws light upon the history of that period.

He took letters of introduction from General Dix to Colonel Benton and others, by whom he was very kindly received. He learned from an unquestionable source that the two Van Burens were for Woodbury, and that it was probable that Colonel Benton was with them. The South were divided between Messrs. Cass, Buchanan, and Dickinson: the desire was to nominate the man who would suit the South and stand the best chance of carrying New York, although little hope of this last was expressed. The feeling of the "full-blood Southern men" was intensely strong against the Van Burens; "they were unwilling to make peace with them on any terms; they hated them with a vindictive hatred." To persons holding that attitude it was represented, cautiously and confidentially, that the great central body of the Free-soilers would, if allowed to, act with the party without any personal stipulations; that the next Presidency depended on the Free-soilers of New York; that "the policy of reasonable men was not to goad the moderate and truly democratic Free-soilers of New

York to madness." This seemed to be an entirely new view of the case, and not at all understood at Washington. It produced a strong impression, though at first treated with ridicule.

Colonel Benton had abandoned all idea of the nomination, and had no desire for it whatever. He was evidently for Woodbury, and desirous of the reunion. As for General Houston, his confidence in himself was absolute: he told the writer that he was sure of every Southern State, both in the caucus and in the election, and he counted on the North with almost equal certainty. This created great merriment among wiser men. It was thought by some of the leading Democratic Senators that Mr. Cass expected a renomination, but was not over-anxious for it unless reasonably sure of success; while Mr. Buchanan's supporters were moving heaven and earth in his behalf.

Upon the whole, the argument that the body of the Democratic Free-soilers of the North were still Democrats, and, unless goaded to desperation and driven off, would steadily and faithfully adhere to the old party; that without the vote of the State of New York the Democratic candidate could not be elected; and that New York could be carried by giving it a liberal candidate—this argument appears to have made the desired impression, and to have aided in securing the reunion of the party. Substantially it was a victory for patriotic and conservative men; and, had the compromise been honorably carried out, the country might have been in a better condition when the heaviest strain came, some years later.

In reply to an invitation from the Tammany Society to attend the celebration of the anniversary of our National Independence, General Dix thus referred to the movement in progress:

"Port Chester, July 1, 1851.

"GENTLEMEN,—I have received your favor, inviting me to attend the celebration of the approaching anniversary of our National Independence

by the Society of Tammany, and I regret that an engagement on that day will prevent me from accepting it.

"The honored name your Society bears, the prominent part it has taken in the great public questions involved in the political contests of the country, the open disregard in which the obligations of the Federal Constitution and the Constitution of this State are held by portions of our fellow-citizens, combine to give universal interest to the occasion; and I am sorry that I am unable to testify by my presence my strong appreciation of its importance.

"I feel with you that only a thorough and cordial reunion of the Democratic party here and elsewhere can eradicate political heresies, and put the ship of state again (to use the language of Jefferson) 'on the Republican tack.' With the assurance that in this great work, involving, as I sincerely believe, the permanent welfare of the country, I shall in every possible mode most cheerfully and earnestly co-operate,

"I am, Gentlemen, very respectfully,

"Your friend and fellow-citizen,

"JOHN A. DIX.

"Messrs. ELIJAH F. PURDY,
WM. I. BROWN,
THOS. DUNLAP,
HENRY STORMS,
RICHD. B. CONOLLY, } Committee of Arrangements."

The death of Judge Woodbury, which occurred on the 7th of September, 1851, made it necessary for his friends to unite upon some other person. The man selected as most acceptable to them was General William O. Butler of Kentucky; his military record was good, his personal character without a blemish. He had already run with General Cass as candidate for the Vice-Presidency, and shared his disastrous defeat, in the campaign of 1848. Governor Marcy was strongly urged in many quarters, and it was thought that the State of New York might be carried by him; but many were of the opinion that his friends never considered it probable that he would be nominated, and that they kept his name prominently before the public with the hope of obtaining a cabinet appointment for him under the next administration, and thus securing the influence of that section of the New York Democracy to which he belonged. Since this was precisely the

result that followed, it is fair to infer of the shrewd politicians of the day that they had made their plans with that design.

The Democratic National Convention was held at Baltimore, on the 1st of June, 1852. General Dix, though not a delegate, was invited and urged to go to Baltimore, and aid by his presence and influence in harmonizing views and securing a favorable action. He answered, declining to appear there:

"Your favor of yesterday urging me to go to Baltimore, and expressing the opinion that my presence there might have much effect in harmonizing the party, is received. I should be most happy to contribute in any way to so desirable a result, but I have always had an insuperable repugnance to attending conventions of which I am not a member. Besides, I am confident that the delegates must be too strongly impressed with the importance of the coming contest to allow differences of opinion with regard to individuals to prevent the reunion of the Democratic party. Though unwilling to interfere personally with the action of the Convention, I shall acquiesce cheerfully in its decisions, and give to its nominees a cordial support. The importance of the election enjoins this duty on us all, and I shall not be backward in performing it."

I find a very entertaining letter from Mr. Francis P. Blair to General Dix, written about a week previous to the meeting at Baltimore. It presents a graphic, if not an attractive, view of the position of affairs:

"Silver Spring, May 24, 1852.

"My dear General,—I have had but little communication with the city for a month past, and have taken so little interest in the movements there that I could not write you a word, even of conjecture, that would deserve your attention. In two or three flying visits recently I have found the purlieus of the Capitol all in a buzz with delegates and their various managers seeking to hive them. There certainly never was such a scene out of a bazaar, which it strongly resembles in many aspects. Nobody seems to think that anybody has a certain, or even a probable, force made up to give him a nomination. All is contingent, and I sup-

pose there never was as much jockeying on a race-course where there were a dozen entries—all the old nags to start, never having won a race, and all the young ones watched, and having neither blood nor appearance to recommend them. It is a clear case for black-leg management to come in for the stakes; and as this is generally felt, I have no doubt the black art will be busily plied. The jobbers stationed at Washington have all opened their houses; wine and wassail is the order of the day with them, and I am told that these appliances are doing wonders for ——. The young and thirsty and greedy are becoming enthusiastic in his cause. ——, ——, and —— seem to be the only ones to whom the honest men turn with any hope of getting deliverance from the plunderers, and their chance depends altogether upon the possibility that the rogues may fall out. There may be enough of the patriotic class, if they should act understandingly, to prevent the Rottens from combining on any one of them; but I am afraid the instincts of the latter will induce them, like wolves, to hunt together, and run down the game by chasing first with one pack and then with another, until they have the carcass among them to rend and growl over. If I were to hazard a conjecture as to the most probable person to keep at bay and drive off the prowlers, I should name Houston; he has had good-luck always on his side, and he has kept such good guard in all his movements as not to provoke nor expose himself to the attacks of his opponents. If there should be an exasperating struggle at Baltimore between the Cass, Douglas, and Buchanan clans, there is great likelihood that the General of San Jacinto may gain another victory."

The history of the proceedings at Baltimore is well-known. First came a terrific slaughter of the old veterans, in which James Buchanan, Lewis Cass, and William L. Marcy, together with General Butler and the hero of San Jacinto, fell prostrate, while Stephen A. Douglas and other younger aspirants shared their fate. Then, after some thirty-five ballotings, came a nomination, by the delegation from Virginia, which took the body by surprise—that of Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire. The conflict became terrific, until, when the ballots had run up to within one of fifty, the Virginia nominee was announced as the choice of the Convention. General Pierce was a Northern man, but with strong Southern sympathies. To the South he was entirely acceptable. The Democracy of both sections combined to support him; and it

was, no doubt, believed that he would pursue a just and impartial course toward the entire party. To any farther agitation of the slavery question he was earnestly opposed, while strongly desirous of forgetting that a division among his own friends on that question had taken place. He lacked, however, among other things, the firmness to pursue an independent course, and was unable to resist influences soon to be brought to bear on him by those who were determined to complete the ostracism of the Free-soil Democrats.

True to his promise, General Dix supported the Baltimore nominations, and exerted himself to secure the election of the candidate of the reunited Democratic party. He was immediately called upon for active service during the approaching canvass, and threw himself with his accustomed ardor and energy into the work. Invitations to address public meetings poured in: one of the first was from the Democracy of Berks County, Pennsylvania, who proposed to hold a meeting on the Fourth of July. The committee say:

"You, with other distinguished Democratic citizens, have been selected for invitation to unite with us in commemorating the approaching Sabbath-day of our Independence and liberty. We but express the sincere sentiments of our minds when we say that your presence with us on that interesting occasion would afford us the highest gratification. The important service which you rendered to the Democracy of the country, as a member of the United States Senate under the Polk administration, and the firm position which you have taken in favor of Pierce and King, our nominees for the offices of President and Vice-President of the United States, induce us to hope much from you in the great canvass which is upon us. Hence we most cordially invite you to honor us with your presence and to address us on that day."

Some idea of the amount of work done during that summer and autumn by General Dix may be formed from his memorandum of appointments to speak. It is as follows:

Tammany Hall: Ratification			Speech published.
Newburgh, N. Y.	July	26.	150,000 copies published by National Committee.
White Plains, N. Y.	Aug.	7.	
Hillsborough, N. H.	"	19.	Speech published.
Trenton, N. J.	Sept.	15.	
Augusta, Me.	"	22.	
Washington Valley	Oct.	5.	
Kingston	"	11.	
Utica	"	13.	
Onondaga Hollow	"	14.	
Seneca Falls	"	15.	
Rome	"	16.	
Pulaski	"	18.	
Fulton	"	19.	
Oswego	"	20.	
Manlius	"	21.	
Ogdensburgh	"	23.	
Watertown	"	25.	
Brookfield	"	26.	
Sangerfield	"	29.	

The autumn elections brought victory to the Democrats. The rout of the Whigs under their gallant and distinguished leader, Major-general Winfield Scott, was complete: four States only were carried by his friends. It was one of those sweeping triumphs which result from the perfect union of a party, and place the successful candidates under a moral obligation of the strongest kind to all who have aided in making the victory complete.

Franklin Pierce, the fourteenth President of the United States, was a native of the State of New Hampshire; he came of one of its most respected families; an ancestor fought in the War of the Revolution; the descendants were Democrats of the Jackson school. A lawyer by profession, he had represented his native town in the Legislature and his State in the Senate; he had also seen service in the army under General Scott during the operations against the city of Mexico. In view of the hereditary and traditional sympathies between

the President-elect and General Dix, their personal relations, and the eminent services rendered by the latter in promoting the election of the former, it was not surprising that General Dix should have received a message from General Pierce, soon after the announcement of the result of the election, requesting him to come to him at once. Nor was it strange that, at the interview which took place at General Pierce's residence at Concord, General Dix should have been informed that he had been selected as Secretary of State under the new administration. This communication was made by the President-elect in a very cordial manner, and with the farther statement that, of all men in the country, there was none whom he more earnestly desired to have connected with his administration. These expressions were received by General Dix with assurances of his wish to aid the President in every way in his power; and they parted with an understanding which could not have been more clear.

As soon as this became known, however, an intrigue commenced, with a view to compel the President to abandon his design. The opposition came, first, from the extreme Southern politicians, and, secondly, from the Hunker section of the Northern Democracy. In assaults of this character men are seldom scrupulous as to the weapons to be employed. The President was told that the proposed appointment would be a fatal, and probably an irretrievable, mistake; that the administration must be thoroughly loyal to Southern interests; that on every point in which those interests had been or might be involved the Cabinet must be a unit; that the support of Southern Senators and Congressmen could not be expected if a prominent Free-soiler were at the President's right hand. One can easily imagine what kind of argument and influence would be employed under those circumstances, and with what vigor the screws would be applied to the individual thus placed upon the rack by way of inducement to change his mind and break a promise.

General Pierce had not the force of character to enable

him to resist this pressure. A second interview took place, at which he began, with embarrassment, by intimating that it was possible that his action had been precipitate. General Dix, who was aware of the intrigue, and regarded it as likely to prove successful, hastened to the relief of the President, assuring him that he anticipated what he was about to say, and that he released him at once from any sense of obligation founded on what had previously occurred. The President could not withhold his thanks for the manner in which his intended apologies had been arrested, and the painful interview terminated.

For this first breach of faith it is thought that his old opponents among the Democracy of New York were mainly responsible. I have already observed that their persistency in supporting Mr. Marcy as a candidate for the Presidency was not the result of an expectation that he could be nominated, but rather of a hope to secure the chief place for him in the Cabinet. When the interview at Concord took place Mr. Marcy was absent on a visit to Florida for the benefit of the health of a member of his family. The intrigue against General Dix began soon after his return to the North; and when the Cabinet was announced his name was sent to the Senate as the President's nominee for Secretary of State. These coincidences are, to say the least of it, impressive.

Great indignation was felt at this breach of faith by the friends of General Dix; and it may be supposed that the President himself was conscious of a certain degree of shame at the way in which he had treated his old friend. But personal considerations were not the only ones involved; a large section of the Democratic party was thus aggrieved, and, as it were, officially informed that it was to consider itself as proscribed by the new administration. It was, then, with a double motive that a movement was immediately begun, having for its object to atone to General Dix for the indignity offered to him, and to secure for his friends a recognition at Washington. But, as soon as he heard of this design, he

wrote an earnest protest against it so far as he himself had involved:

"New York, March 9, 1853.

"My dear Sir,—I have just returned from Philadelphia, and found your favor of the 5th inst.

"You say you intend to present my name to the President for a foreign mission. I beg you not to do so. After all that has occurred, such an appointment, if made at all, should be voluntarily tendered. I would not, under any other circumstances, even take an acceptance under consideration. Excuse my haste, and believe me, sincerely yours,

"John A. Dix.

"Hon. Preston King."

The invitation came, however, freely tendered, and again by the President: he was offered the mission to France. Satisfied that the circumstances absolved him from any responsibility save that of mere acceptance or refusal; knowing that he had not sought it, nor taken any steps, directly or indirectly, to obtain it; and yet not without much hesitation and careful consideration, he finally concluded to accede to the President's desire, and informed him that he was willing to go abroad.

The time fixed was early in the summer of that year. The President happened to be, for the moment, in embarrassment about the Treasury in the city of New York; it was without a head, and he could not immediately nominate. He therefore requested General Dix, as a matter of personal favor to himself, to hold the office for a few weeks, until the date of his sailing for France. This proposition was most distasteful in every way; still, always unselfish and ready to sacrifice his convenience to oblige others, he agreed to render the President the temporary service thus demanded of him, and entered on his duties at the Treasury. Meanwhile passage was taken for Havre, preparations for a four years' residence abroad were made, and every arrangement was completed which an anticipated absence from home renders necessary.

But political intrigue was instantly resumed, and again with complete success. I shall not pursue the details of this

him orable business. The opposition now came, or appears at ... have come, mainly from certain Southern politicians.* Among them a Senator from Mississippi was particularly active. Charges which they must have known to be false were made by prominent individuals—such, for example, as this: that General Dix was an abolitionist, and that the administration would be untrue to the South by allowing a man of that fanatical and extreme party to represent it abroad. Nothing could have been more untrue. Whatever the merits of the abolitionists and their claims on the respect and admiration of posterity, one thing was perfectly clear and well known to every statesman, North and South—that General Dix was not of that school, but had invariably, from the beginning of his political career, opposed their designs. His vote had been given in the Senate for the admission of Texas to the Union; he had endorsed the union of the Democratic party on the basis of the Compromise measures introduced by Mr. Clay; he was in favor of the surrender of fugitive slaves;† he had given his cordial support to the administration. There was no ground for the charge that he was an abolitionist; as little for suspicion of his sincerity in adhering to the Baltimore platform and desiring the removal of the question of slavery from the national politics. When, therefore, I find prominent Southern politicians denouncing

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* See Appendix, No. IV.

† "The Northern States have been repeatedly charged in this debate, and on many previous occasions, with aggression and violations of the Constitutional compact in their action on the subject of slavery. With regard to the surrender of fugitive slaves—the case most frequently cited—it is possible that there may have been some action, or inaction, in particular States, not in strict accordance with the good faith they ought to observe in this respect. I know not how it is; but we know there is an effective power to legislate on this subject in Congress, and I am sure there will be no want of co-operation on our part in carrying out the requirements of the Constitution by providing all reasonable means for executing them."—*U. S. Senate Debates*, July 26, 1848.

him as they did, my conclusion is that they must have had another and a deeper design. Their real objection was not on the score of abolitionism. They knew as well as he did that it could not be sustained. The fact was this, that Secession was already in their thoughts; that steps had even then been taken toward a dissolution of the Union, and that they feared the influence of one who might be counted on as their enemy if it came to the question of asserting the right of individual States to withdraw, forcibly if necessary, and set up a separate government under a separate flag.

The vile charges of "mercenary motives" and "personal debasement" which, in addition to that of abolitionism, were freely made against General Dix, drew forth an able and convincing defence from his friends, both North and South; but though these insinuations were repelled, the influence exerted to prevent the President from nominating him to the French mission was too strong to be resisted. In fact, the place was wanted for an eminent gentleman from the State of Virginia.

About the 1st of June rumors were current in New York that a very strong opposition was made to the appointment of General Dix as Minister to France. By the middle of the month these had assumed so definite a shape that he was constrained to believe them to be well-founded. He addressed a letter to the Hon. R. McClelland on the subject, in which he says:

"Let me say, first, that I have not sought the appointment in question, and that its chief value in my estimation would be the evidence it would furnish of the President's confidence.

"My object in writing to you is to ascertain, if I can, what the opposition amounts to. I do not desire any information which you cannot with the strictest propriety give. If I know its source and its extent, I can judge better what is its motive, and whether it is due to myself to attempt to correct misrepresentation, or whether my self-respect demands that I should let it have its course.

"The President is fully acquainted with my position, and can refute any misstatement which comes to his ears.

"I supposed the question of free-soilism was settled on my nomination

to the office I now hold; and it was only the consideration that I had been made instrumental to the good of the Democratic party which reconciled me to a place utterly repugnant to my wishes and tastes, and exceedingly prejudicial to my private interests. If this question is to be re-opened I shall regard myself as having suffered in vain. I have the materials of self-vindication in my own hands, but I will not use them to procure an appointment I do not ask. In defence of the appointment, if made, I can do so without any sacrifice of my self-respect.

"Cordially, your friend, JOHN A. DIX."

The spring and summer passed away, and it became quite certain that the nomination to the French mission would not be made. The General was prepared for this fresh affront, but his sense of duty triumphed over that of a keenly-felt personal indignity, and he strove to screen the administration from the criticism which it merited. The following letter was addressed to one of those personal friends, himself an officer in the United States Naval Service, whose indignation, if not restrained, might have carried him beyond bounds:

"*Private.*

"New York, August 29, 1853.

"MY DEAR ——,—The President will violate his pledge to me and give the mission to France to some one else. Mr. Flagg and I have considered this settled since the middle of June (before I had been in this office a month)—not that the President so intended at that time, but we knew he was giving ear to counsels which would be too powerful for his firmness of purpose. A politician is like a woman: he must resist the first accents of seduction, or he is lost.

"I write you this in advance of the public announciation of the result, in order that you may prepare yourself, by suitable discipline of feeling, to take it calmly. Whatever others may do, I must entreat you to keep quiet, as I intend to do myself. It is too grave a matter to be met with any exhibition of ill-temper.

"I consider the honor of the administration at stake; for the President told me that every member of his Cabinet was in favor of my appointment. We must remember that he is the head of the Democratic party and the Chief Magistrate of the country, and that the public reputation will be impaired by the act of bad faith he is about to commit. Should we not, then, as good citizens, rather cover it up, if we can, than

expose it and furnish a subject of public scandal to our enemies? This is my wish; and no one has so large a personal interest in the question as myself. The mission, as you know, is of no consequence to me; and if the President had written to me frankly, as he was bound on every principle to do, saying that he considered it important to his administration or to himself to make some other disposition of the appointment, I should have told him at once to do with it as he pleased. But, instead of communicating with me directly, he has, since the last of June, been conversing with a number of persons who have come to me, by his desire, to repeat what he said to them—that I had better decline the appointment—that my views on the slavery question were not sufficiently understood—that I might not be confirmed by the Senate, etc. Besides the awkwardness of declining an appointment before it is formally tendered, I never could consent to withdraw on the grounds above assigned. It would be a confession of their validity, which I do not admit.

"In respect to the office I hold I have no concern. I have requested the President to release me from it. If he does not, I shall send him a formal resignation of a place which I accepted most unwillingly on a condition—a condition he does not intend to fulfil. Under these circumstances I have no fears that I shall not be allowed to retire at an early day.

"I write in great haste, and have no time to copy. My sole object is to entreat you, as my friend, to be silent when you see the appointment to France announced. Yours ever,

"John A. Dix."

Later in the summer (August 20, 1853) General Dix received a letter from the President, requesting an interview "on matters of interest to him." The invitation was politely declined, with a counter-request to be immediately relieved of his duties as Assistant Treasurer. His course in declining to see the President received the cordial approval of his friends.

The end of this wretched business, discreditable to the administration and to those who succeeded in thus leading the President to a second breach of his promise, came in due time. The name of the Hon. John Y. Mason, of Virginia, was sent to the Senate; he was immediately confirmed as Minister to the French Court; and Cerberus, propitiated with this additional sop, was for the moment satisfied.

Upon the whole I think it a matter of congratulation that

the well-meant efforts of President Pierce to strengthen his administration by connecting General Dix with it did not succeed. I have no doubt of the sincerity of the President: subsequent acts attested it. But he could not do what he wished, and was forced to submit to circumstances. What might have been the result if my father—with his devotion to the Union, and his vigorous way of dealing with some questions—had been in the Cabinet, is matter for conjecture. The policy pursued through those four years deepened the trouble and darkened the prospect in front. That unfortunate administration helped by almost every measure to prepare the way for the Civil War; it heightened the fever already burning in the political system. Those were formative years, during which disaster was pressing forward *à pas de charge*. Looking back to them, and seeing how the tide then ran, and how fast the ship of state was driving, I do not regret that my father was in retirement. When at length he reappeared on the stage of events it was easier to see the way, to know what ought to be said, and to do what must be done.

VII.

NEW YORK.—EUROPE.

A.D. 1853-1860.

Voyage to Havre.—Steamship *Humboldt*.—Death of Mrs. Morgan on the Voyage.—Wreck of the *Humboldt*.—"Missouri Compromise."—Bagni di Lucca.—December 8, 1854: in Rome.—Journal of Travel from Rome to Marseilles.—Return Home.—St. Augustine, Fla.—Fort of St. Mark.—Cornwall.—N. P. Willis: "Idlewild."—President of the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad.—Project of Railroad to the Pacific.—Vestryman of Trinity Church.—Attack on the Church in the Legislature.—Defeat of the Assailants.—Letter from Bishop Potter.—Political Affairs of the Period: the Riots of 1857.—Stephen H. Branch.—The Canvass of 1856 for the Presidency.—The Election of James Buchanan.—Letters to him from General Dix on his Policy and the Prospects of his Administration.

VII.

The arrangements for a removal to Europe and a residence abroad, which had been made when the President offered the mission of France to General Dix, were carried into effect notwithstanding the unexpected action of the administration. On the 22d of October, 1853, a part of the family sailed for Havre in the steamship *Humboldt*, whose commander, Captain Lines, is still remembered as a popular officer and a thorough seaman. General Dix, having business which detained him in New York, deferred his departure till the following year. One of the party on the *Humboldt* was Mrs. Morgan. She had been very ill at Manursing Island during the summer; it was hoped that the sea-voyage would restore her health, and this appeared to be the result, for no one on the ship seemed brighter or happier than she. On the 5th of November she remained in the cabin till an unusually late hour of the evening, playing her favorite game of whist, and afterward joining in the general conversation with more than her usual vivacity. That night she was found unconscious in her state-room, and at two o'clock A.M. of the 7th, as the ship was entering the Roads of Havre, her soul departed.

The body, having been embalmed, was placed in a metallic coffin, and sent home by the same vessel. Ill-fated ship! On the return voyage she went ashore near Halifax. The wreck did not break up at once; there was time to secure what could be saved. On the 9th my father was notified by a telegram from the scene of the disaster that the coffin had been recovered. It was brought to New York by the steamer *Marion*, and received by us on the 22d of December. The following

day (Friday), at 10 A.M., the body, after its dread passage from coast to coast, and its temporary loss in the sea, was at length laid reverently in the family vault in Trinity Church-yard. Few persons were present besides the General and myself. The weather was inexpressibly dreary — gloomy, and dark, with a heavy wind from the raw north-east, and a dull, steady rain. Others, alas! had reason to remember that day. The wind shifted in the afternoon and came out from the north-west, blowing with fury, as a gale from that quarter always does when it begins. At sunset a long line of clear sky appeared under the rapidly lifting curtains of the previous storm. It betokened trouble on the deep. Among the ill-fated vessels out that awful night was the steamship *San Francisco*. She sailed from New York, December 21, for San Francisco, *viâ* the Straits of Magellan, having on board the Third Regiment U. S. Artillery, Colonel Gates commanding; Major Merchant, Lieutenant-colonel Washington, and other officers, with their wives and children. She was struck by the storm off the North Carolina coast, and foundered a day or two afterward. Rarely has a disaster of that kind produced a more painful sensation; the city was filled with consternation at the accounts of the horrible scenes attending the destruction of so many brave men and helpless women and children, and for years that awful night was remembered with a shudder.

The winter of 1853–'54 was spent by my father in New York. I was in Philadelphia at that time, connected with St. Mark's Church, as one of the assistant ministers, under the Rev. Joseph P. B. Wilmer, D.D., afterward Bishop of Louisiana. My father came occasionally to Philadelphia, where he was welcomed by old friends. Among these was Mrs. Elizabeth Biddle, at whose house he sometimes stayed: a very charming and accomplished woman, the daughter of Mr. Joseph Hopkinson, and a descendant of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Always busy, and devoted to his home circle, the General spent some time that winter in preparing a series of papers

on the history of Rome, its soldiers and statesmen, its poets and philosophers; each of these papers when finished was sent to the family, for their entertainment and instruction, during their residence in the Eternal City. He would have them to be students together with him, and, though absent, he thus pleasantly allied himself with their pursuits, and kept in constant communion with them.

Meanwhile trouble thickened about the path of the administration. Within ten months after the inauguration of President Pierce a rude shock was given to the hopes of peace and security founded on his election. The act of 1820, known as the "*Missouri Compromise*," was always regarded by Northern statesmen as a kind of palladium of national quiet, and as settling the slavery question fairly and equitably by admitting Missouri as a slave-holding State, but forever excluding slavery north of 36° 30′. In the month of January, 1854, Mr. Stephen A. Douglas brought a bill into the Senate of the United States repealing the latter branch of that compromise in the case of the States of Kansas and Nebraska, to be formed out of territory part of which lay north of the line. The bill provided, indeed, that it should be left to the inhabitants of that region to determine the question of slavery or freedom for themselves, but it removed the prohibition of thirty-four years' standing. This bill, opposed by Thomas H. Benton in the House of Representatives, and by Messrs. Chase, Sumner, Seward, and Houston in the Senate, passed both Houses of Congress, however, the majority in the Senate being 37 over 14, and the vote in the House being very close, 113 to 100. A great sensation was produced by these proceedings. Mr. Francis P. Blair wrote to General Dix on the subject as follows:

"From my present impressions of things I infer that we are to have a renewed contest for the ascendency of slavery over freedom, which will shake the pillars of the Confederacy. The South finds it so easy to purchase support in the North by pandering to the ambition of leaders in the North, who

manage the people through the corrupt convention system, that she will set up for dominion over the North, as England now does in Ireland, by buying up leaders. I hope there will be honest patriots enough found to resist it, and that the present aggression will be rebuked. I am willing to devote the balance of my life to this object. I would not hesitate to put myself on the tread-mill of a press and declare war against all the conspirators, high and low, if I could hope it would avail anything."

The views of General Dix on the Nebraska bill are expressed in the following letter:

"New York, February 25, 1854.

"My dear Sir,—Your letter came to me at Philadelphia a few days ago.

"I consider the movement in favor of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise an act of equally bad policy and bad faith. We were told that the Compromise of 1850 was "a finality"—that there was to be no more slavery legislation — that the Missouri Compromise disposed of the Louisiana Territory—that the Compromise of 1850 disposed of the territory acquired from Mexico—and that there was nothing left to quarrel about. We assented to the compromise measures of 1850 with this distinct understanding. The country assented to them for the sake of repose from the slavery agitation. The Nebraska bill violates this understanding and disturbs this repose. The Compromise of 1850 would never have received the assent of Congress or the people, if they had been told that it was to annul the Missouri Compromise and re-open the slavery question.

"The Nebraska bill allows the people of that Territory to have slaves if they will. This is not the end. Some of the Southern men already contend that the people of a Territory have no right to exclude slaves from it—that slave-holders have a right to take their slaves into any Territory of the United States and hold them there, whether the people of the Territory wish it or not. This will be the next movement, and I fear there are Northern politicians who, for the sake of office, will yield the point.

"I am in favor of adhering to all the compromises honestly and faithfully—to the Missouri Compromise in respect to the laws over a Territory, and to the Compromise of 1850 in respect to the territory acquired from Mexico—I stand by them all, for the sake of honor, truth, and domestic peace. There is no safety in any other course—none for us and none for

the South—for if one compromise is good for nothing, the others are worthless, as time will inevitably show.

"I am mortified and grieved at this state of things. It is bad in principle, worse in policy, and good in nothing.

"You ask me what General Pierce's opinion is. I do not know. Some say he is for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise—others as confidently that he is against it. I should be very sorry to differ with the President and his Cabinet on any question, for I look to them with confidence for sound financial measures, and these are always of vital importance to good government. But I regard this question as one of high obligation and good faith, and I am against the Nebraska bill, whoever may be for it. In the mere practical concerns of government it is sometimes a duty to yield to the opinions of those with whom we act, but never in matters involving essential principles. I write in great haste, and not for publication. I need not add, I am always your friend,

"JOHN A. DIX.

"Hon. JAS. C. CURTIS."

Writing to Colonel Benton, April 15, 1854, he expresses the doubt he felt as to the best way of dealing with this new difficulty, and gives very distinctly his views as to the blunder committed in the Free-soil movement of 1848:

"Mr. Van Buren has written and spoken freely against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise as proposed by the Nebraska bill; and he made a movement in favor of a meeting of the leading Democrats in the city of New York to express their views on the subject. But it was found that they would consist mainly of the old Free-soil leaders, and it was thought by most of us that such a meeting would do more harm than good. The unfortunate union with the Whigs at Buffalo in 1848 has disqualified us for any useful service as leaders in any great party movement, partaking in any degree of a sectional character. I say *us*, although you are well aware that I disapproved of that union, and did all I could to prevent it. I mention this fact in confirmation of the opinion I have expressed that Mr. V. B. has been from the beginning opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. He has spoken and written against it, and was desirous of taking part in a public demonstration against it."

The following spring I resigned my position at St. Mark's Church, Philadelphia, and went abroad, to join the rest of our family in Italy. I took passage on the steamship *Arctic*, Captain Luce, another of the ill-fated Collins line, and destined to a more terrible destruction than the *Humboldt*, her sister ship. It was my intention to have returned to the United States in the autumn, in the same vessel, but a change of plans saved me from being involved in the horrible calamity so well remembered, and, perhaps, from perishing with the rest. Late in the month of May I met my people at Leghorn; we went thence to the Bagni di Lucca, where we passed the summer. The region is one of the most beautiful that can be imagined; the hills are high, and covered with a magnificent foliage of chestnuts, oaks, and other forest trees. The Serchio winds its way among them, a mere rivulet in the dry season, but in the spring and winter a deep, strong flood. There were three hotels at the Bagni, two on this side of the river, and the third just opposite—the "Europe," at which we stayed, the "Cardinali," and the "Nicolai." The proprietor of these three houses was an ex-officer of Napoleon's army; he conducted his little realm with a military precision which was not only admirable but somewhat amusing. Five minutes before the dinner-hour mine host appeared at the front-door of the "Europe," his hand on a bell-rope, and his eye on the front-doors of the other two hotels; four minutes before the dinner-hour a sub-lieutenant (as it were) appeared in the door of the "Cardinali," and a similar officer at that of the "Nicolai," each with his hand on a bell-rope, and each fixing his eyes on the chief. Precisely at the first stroke of four the three bell-ropes were jerked, and a tremendous clatter awoke the echoes up and down. Everything else was managed in the same formal and exact way, the bustling Frenchman all the while beaming with good-humor, swelling with importance, and directing operations as if a division of the *grande armée* were under his command.

The Baths of Lucca were, and I believe are still, a favorite

place of summer resort. Among our friends were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Crawford, who, with their children, occupied an apartment not far from our hotel. A most original character was also there, a Mrs. Stisted, the wife of General Stisted, an old Peninsular officer; she had written a book or two, occasionally gave an entertainment, and conducted herself in an eccentric manner. The contrast in size between herself and her husband was striking; she took a certain pleasure in observing his extremely emaciated appearance, remarking on one occasion that he looked like "the shadow of a fishing-pole." Mrs. Stisted was an object of continual interest, whether she appeared in her landau, driving up and down the smooth roads, or taking a constitutional with attending lackeys, or devoutly engaged in the service at the English church. That edifice, fearfully plain, and as unlike a house of God as it could be made, was served by a chaplain of Irish blood and extreme evangelical views. Although I was there three months, and never missed a service at the chapel, he did not honor me with the slightest fraternal recognition, having observed, doubtless, that my clerical coat was of that peculiar cut which the English of the period used to designate as the "M. B.," or "Mark of the Beast." Times have changed for the better since that day, and I question whether the clergy of our Church, be their schools what they may, could now be guilty of such incivility to each other.

We left the Bagni on the first day of September, at six o'clock in the morning, and at half-past one that afternoon found ourselves in Florence, at a hotel in the Piazza Santa Trinità. On the 30th the General arrived, and a joyful reunion of the family occurred. We were happy in being all together once more and again, after the lapse of ten years, in the city of Fra Angelico and Giotto, and near the Uffizi, the Pitti, the blooming Cascine, and the heights of San Miniato and Fiesole. The autumn passed rapidly away, and the time drew near for a return to Rome for the winter.

On the 8th of December of that year the new dogma of

the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary was to be officially proclaimed, and thenceforth, under the dire penalties of excommunication, to be bound on the consciences of Roman Catholics as an article of the Christian faith. Report of the ceremonies with which this announcement was to be celebrated going forth on every wind attracted multitudes to Rome. Desirous of being present and witnessing the extraordinary scenes, I set out, in advance of the family, on the 27th of November, and travelled by *malle-poste* to Rome, passing through Siena and Radicofani, and arriving at the Porta del Popolo at half-past 3 A.M. of the 29th. I was ill when I left Florence, and worse when I finished the journey; and after a day or two of fighting against the inevitable found myself in bed, in my room in the Hotel Spillman, in the Via della Croce, burning up with typhoid fever. Word was sent to Florence by the physician who had been called to me, and in a few days the family arrived. I was in bed forty days and nights, and did not leave my room till March of the following year. The 8th of December came; I had a confused sense of the ringing of bells and the roar of cannon; but it was like a dream of one knows not what. One day I asked my father—looking at his calm, quiet face, with the earnest expression in it which had then become habitual—how near we were to Christmas; and he told me that it was long past, and that we were near the middle of the first month of the new year.

I cannot think of those terrible weeks without profound emotion. Under God I owed my life to my father's untiring watchfulness and tenderness. For twenty-five nights in succession he never left me, and never slept. By day he slept a while and took a brisk walk outside the city walls, but all night long, night after night, he kept his vigil by my side. Something was to be done every half-hour, and he would trust no one in that critical time of the twenty-four hours, wherein, if the attendant be careless or forgetful, a man's soul may pass away.

What went on that winter I know only from report of others; it was a blank in my life. From that peculiar type of the disease one recovers, if at all, a mere wreck in body and mind. I could not remember anything that had occurred; memory and the power of thought seemed to be lost for the time; slowly they came back, and the past rose up again distinct and clear.

The French were then in occupation of Rome. Detachments marched out of the city every morning for drill beyond the walls; the crash of the drum corps was heard always about a certain hour, or the loud, clear ringing of the bugles blowing at the head of the column. The men had the bright, easy, nonchalant air of their nation, and passed jauntily up and down the Corso, as if they had not a care or serious thought. Sometimes things would happen to stir the dull surface of commonplace life. Under the mild sway of the Papacy capital punishment was never inflicted; but during the French occupation the rule was changed, and executions were done under military direction. One morning two criminals were put to death. Several days in advance placards on the walls of houses and at the corners of the streets announced the impending tragedy, and requested prayers for the souls of the doomed men. The General had never seen the guillotine in operation. He went in the gray dawn and obtained a place close by the machine of death. After witnessing the proceedings he came home and ate his breakfast as usual. He was, apparently, a man without nerves, and always as calm as a morning in summer, whatever the affair in hand might be.

It was far on in April before I was able to travel: by that time, however, we had another invalid in the party. The impression made on my mother by my illness, and by the dread of its fatal termination, was so great that, on my recovery, she broke utterly down. Our anxieties were now for her; she had not been in so critical a state since the year 1842, when they went to Madeira to save her life. It was

under these depressing circumstances that the General took his departure from Rome, on the 8th day of May; but the journey then undertaken proved a delightful one, and facilitated the recovery of the invalids. It abounded in entertaining incidents; and a journal, freely illustrated with caricature sketches, was kept by one of the party. A few extracts, with fac-similes of some of the grotesque drawings, may amuse the reader. The setting out is thus described:

"On Monday, the 7th of May, 1855, the Family Dix were all awake and flying around at an unusually early hour. The morning was cloudy, and rain had already fallen, so that their spirits were somewhat dull; but the General consoled them by an Irish proverb to this effect, that 'if it rains before seven in the morning, the divil a bit will it rain that day.' Breakfast having been despatched, the important information came that our vetturino, Marcelin Ravel, was at the door, and the process of packing the trunks was commenced.

"Some time before we started we saw from the window two large carriages, heavily laden, driving up the Corso. Their occupants were an English family of the name of 'Dodworth,' consisting of thirteen persons. As they saw our carriage still standing at the door we observed grins of satisfaction lighting up their countenances, as it is reckoned desirable to get off first and keep ahead. We felt rather down in the mouth at this, but subsequent events restored our spirits completely.

"As we arrived at the Piazza del Popolo we saw another vettura coming up behind us, a discovery which afforded us no small satisfaction, as we found ourselves not the last. Passing through the old gate, we left Rome with varied feelings of pleasure and regret.

"Nothing of much importance occurred, except that it rained, in spite of the Irish proverb, and pretty fast, too. The great discovery of the morning was that of three 'uglies,' which L—— had caused to be prepared some three weeks be-

fore, and which were now for the first time displayed, much to M——'s discomfiture, who had, for the rest of the journey, those dreadful objects constantly before him.

"At one o'clock we arrived at Sette Vene, the first stopping-place, where we ordered a 'fork-breakfast.' At this station we overhauled the Dodworths, or 'Dodworth's Band,' as they were familiarly termed; and presently after our arrival came up the other carriage before referred to. C—— went down and scraped acquaintance with the people. He found that it was the family of a gentleman from Bengal going on to Florence.

"Breakfast being finished, we started again about three o'clock. In about two hours and a half we found ourselves at Civita Castellana, an uninteresting place. Fortunately, we arrived at the hotel on the very heels of the Dodworths, and found the innkeeper puzzled to death to know what to do with them; when, seeing our comparatively small party, it probably occurred to him to solve in some degree the complicated problem by instantly showing us to an apartment; in which, for about half an hour after we had been comfortably ensconced, we could see various members of the unhappy Dodworth family walking distractedly up and down, and could hear the still perplexed landlord ejaculating, 'Sono dieci padroni!'"

The next day they resolved on an early start.

"Breakfasting at half-past six, we were off by seven. What of that? Dodworth's Band and the Bengal tiger had started by five or thereabouts!

"The rain had ceased; the day was very warm, with a bright and unmitigated sun. We passed through some lovely scenery, and for at least an hour after our departure were near that most beautiful of mountains immortalized by Horace in his ode:

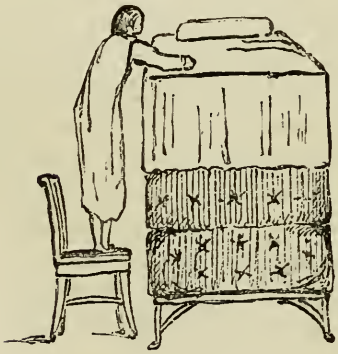
> 'Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
> Soracte?'

"M—— made several sketches of it as we passed rapidly

along. We also descended into an exquisite valley at a place where a tremendous battle was fought between 8000 Frenchmen under Macdonald and 40,000 Neapolitans; but, while all were gazing at the majestic ruins of the Castle of Borghetto, the discovery was made that one of the party was calmly occupied in perusing a little story called 'Daisy Burns.' So great was the general indignation that she put down her book, and for a time looked at the view, like everybody else."

That day they passed through Terni, and struck a region of enormous beds.

"At Terni was the most tremendous bed that ever we saw: there was room in it for at least five persons. The beds all along this road were very peculiar; they grew higher and higher, till, at the last two stations, we had to climb into them on chairs."



On the third day they crossed the great mountain of La Somma, up which the horses were helped by yokes of oxen. Arriving at Spoleto, "the first thing we saw as we drove up to the inn was several heads of the Dodworths thrust from the windows above, and serenely contemplating us. They and the Bengalese had already arrived, of course."

Foligno was the resting-place that night.

"The inn, like all along the route, was wanting in the comfort of carpets. This defect we attempted to supply by putting our shawls on the bare brick floors, and then sitting round in a ring, with our feet on them—a particularly droll sight."

The fourth day brought them to Perugia, where "the party sallied forth in search of the works of Pietro Perugino, having previously ascertained from 'Murray' that the principal

ones were in the Exchange and one or two other specified places. And now occurred accidents worthy to be recorded, not upon parchment, but upon brass. The General assured us that he knew perfectly well the position of the *Sala del Cambio*, and was so confident about it that we followed him with no hesitation. He led us to a building venerable enough to be any *sala* in the world, and asked the sentry who stood at the door where Perugino's frescoes were to be found. The man appearing to be hopelessly in the dark on this point, we entered the gloomy building, and were assailed by a small and ragged boy, who answered our incoherent inquiries by equally

GUIDED BY THE GENERAL, WE GO IN SEARCH OF PERUGINO'S FRESCOES, AND BRING UP AT THE CITY PRISON.

incoherent answers. Thus we went on, up one pair of stairs, and down a long passage, in which were nothing but small doors, and then up another and another flight, and down divers passages, expecting every moment to arrive at the door of the majestic Hall of Exchange; when at last we brought

up, boy and all, at the end of a dark corridor. There was an iron grating, and outside stood an ill-favored man, regarding us with amazement, in which we found ourselves sharers with himself. At last the silence was broken by his question, 'Cosa vogliono?' Vogliono vedere i prigionieri?'

"The truth was, that the General had ingeniously guided us to the door of the Criminal Prison, and the frescoes of Perugino danced as *ignes fatui* before our confused minds. How cheap we felt, how astounded the spectators were, how the sentry and the laundress of the prison grinned, and how M—— blew up the ragged boy as we slowly retired in confusion, may be left to the imagination."

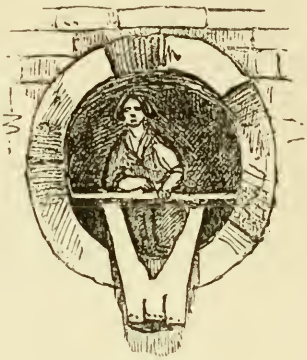
On leaving Perugia they at last got to the front of the procession.

"We had experienced much annoyance thus far. The Bengal man generally started an hour before us, but, as we had better horses, we invariably overtook him. It is a point of honor with the vetturini not to pass each other on the road; so we were obliged to tug on behind, and got in much later than we should otherwise have done. On this occasion, however, by a skilful manœuvre we got the start, and were thenceforth ahead of the whole field, the Dodworths having been left hull-down, for we never heard of them or saw them again on the journey."

The next night was spent on the shores of the beautiful and historic Lake Thrasymene, and thence, passing through Arezzo and Monte Varchi, they arrived in Florence on the 12th of May. So delighted were they with their driver, their equipage, and the pleasant manner of the journey, that they resolved to continue it to Nice, by way of Genoa, over the Cornice Road, undoubtedly the most beautiful drive in the world. These things are now utterly lost to the general traveller, who is whirled by rail through a region of which it is impossible for him, in that breathless, reckless hurry, to form a just appreciation. Far happier were we in those days, ere the lovely coast had been profaned by such im-

provements, and when the choice was between the leisurely progress by land and a passage by steamer.

The drive from Florence to Nice began on the 17th of May. The first day's journey brought them to Pisa. The artist of the expedition has given a sketch of "one of the antiquities of the place."



VIEW IN PISA.

At Pietra Santa they crossed the frontier of Parma, and passed in view of the marble mountains of Carrara, and so went into Sardinia. Beyond Sarzana they achieved the high adventure of the river Magra, of which a particular account is given, with an illustration:

"It is a broad and rapid stream, without a bridge, and too deep to ford. Arrived at the bank, the carriage was backed down to the water's edge. All got out of it except mother and L——; the horses were taken off, and then eight stout men, with pantaloons rolled up as high as they could be rolled, laid hold of the wheels, and, plunging into the water, dragged the carriage out to a large, flat scow-boat, into which they rolled it. As we stood contemplating these things from the shore, and uncertain what was coming next, other men, with a similar arrangement of legs, rushed up, and, seizing us, carried us off in their arms or on their backs, and bore us in safety to the boat. It would be impossible to describe the feelings of the party thus taken by surprise, but all resigned themselves with fortitude to the trying circumstances. The horses followed, Ravel riding one and C—— another; and so we all got safely aboard. The boat was then poled across to the opposite bank, where we were landed in the same extraordinary manner. This thing is sometimes no joke; in stormy weather it is dangerous to cross, and in the spring-time the

river is sometimes impassable when swollen by the melting of the snow on the mountains. Two days before we were there no one could cross."

Sunday, May 20, was quietly spent at Spezzia, then the naval station of the American Mediterranean squadron. After that they passed through Borghetto and Sestri di Levante, crossing spurs of the Apennines, and enjoying magnificent views of the blue Mediterranean. On ascending the

CROSSING THE MAGRA.

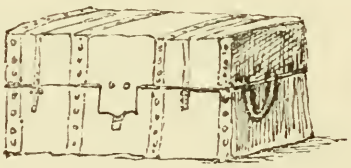
long hills all who could walk did so, not merely to relieve the horses, but also from preference. The only drawback was the importunity of beggars. The General had an ingenious method of relieving himself from these tormentors. My mother's sobriquet was "the Principessa," a title first bestowed on her by the Roman beggars, who, seeing her walking about in a velvet cloak trimmed with fur, and a fur muff, tippet, and armlets, took her for a Russian princess, and invoked her aid under that impression. On the way up the long hills the General, finding himself surrounded by beggars and unable to enjoy the view, addressed them in a deprecatory air: "I," said he, "am only a poor pilgrim, and have nothing for you; but there comes a carriage up the hill containing a *principessa*, who is very charitable; go to her." The effect was magical: the pilgrim was instantly deserted, and the whole herd scampered off to meet the approaching carriage.

From Sestri to Nice the journey was on the celebrated Cornice Road.

"It is a lovely drive. You go winding in and out of the bays and passing through the most enchanting scenery as one

promontory after another is doubled, and bay after bay recedes, bidding you pass along and quite around its whole extent. The waves roll in almost under the carriage windows, and the views up and down the coast extend for many miles each way. In point of mechanical execution the road is simply magnificent. Some of the stiffest headlands are traversed by tunnels, and the pathway rests on solid walls, to save it from destruction by landslips on the one side or seaward storms on the other."

In a large family there is always plenty of delightful chaff. The General afforded opportunities for this by his characteristic habit of speaking most energetically and decidedly on nearly every subject. One day, as we were about to start, a loud exclamation was heard from him: "Now, there is a thing which I dislike more than anything in this world!" A sudden rush of the entire family was made, each anxious for information as to this antipathy, when we perceived the General regarding, with severe aspect, a trunk which had hanging out at the side one of the linen straps which are used to hold the top steady when open. All took warning for the future. The trunk was opened, the strap slipped in, and the excitement subsided.



Passing along, "we came to a village which struck Mrs. Dix as so very beautiful in its position and its general aspect that she was anxious to know its name. The General informed her, to her surprise, that it had no name and was no place. How he found this out we presumed not to inquire; but, notwithstanding its insignificance, it was thought right to mention it in the journal, and to observe that 'no place' has a picturesque church and graceful cottages; that no place is traversed by a mountain stream spanned by a graceful bridge; that no place pleased us very much; and, finally, that no place delighted us more than any place we saw that day."

On the 26th of May, after leaving Genoa, they passed through a memorable little town, of which an unpleasant account is given:

"Cogoleto claims the honor of having given birth to Columbus. If that distinguished man had as poor fare and as many b–d-b–gs as we were afflicted with in this place, it is easy to see why he became discontented and went away to try and find a new world."

Arriving at Nice on the 29th, they remained there a week, and then pursued the journey to Marseilles, always with their devoted Ravel. The region is historically interesting, and full of memories of the Emperor Napoleon I.: at Cannes and Fréjus these abound. The country about Cannes is lovely; Provence is a garden, and that is one of its most delicious portions. The journey from Nice to Marseilles occupied three days; and so delighted were the party with their journey that it is placed on record as the unanimous feeling that if there had been any means of going home to America by land they would undoubtedly have kept Ravel, and made a contract with him to drive them thither.

Such an arrangement, however, being impossible, resort was had to the means of transportation commonly in use; and on the 4th day of July the General, with nearly all the family, sailed from Havre in the steamship *Arago*, Captain Lines, for home. I followed them ten days later, having spent a fortnight in England.

The winter of 1855–'56 was passed in Florida. The General, who disliked cold weather, found himself thoroughly comfortable and happy, in a delicious summer climate, and with plenty of alligators at hand whereon to try his skill as a rifleman. Many were the remarkable exploits performed by him on the banks of the St. John's in his pursuit of those repulsive reptiles. The monotony of life at Dr. Benedict's "Sanitarium" was relieved by a visit to St. Augustine, then, as now, one of the most interesting relics of antiquity in the United States. Its old gate-way and picturesque plaza, with

the Roman Catholic church on the one side and the Episcopal church just opposite; the sea-wall, affording a delightful walk in the cool of the day; the palm-trees and tiled roofs; the veiled Minorean women—all these gave an air of strangeness to the place. But the object of chief interest was the fort of St. Mark, built in the days of the Spanish domination, and at such a cost to the home government that it is related how, on one occasion, the King, on a fresh requisition for funds, ascended the roof of his palace in despair, and, gazing wistfully westward, exclaimed that he thought by this time he ought to see the walls rising out of the ocean. The interest awakened by the sight of this relic of other days may be inferred from a letter to the Senators from Florida *à propos* of its importance and value:

"New York, May 10, 1856.

"*Messrs. Yulee and Mallory, U. S. Senators from Florida:*

"GENTLEMEN,—Although I have just returned from Florida, where I have passed the greater part of the last winter with my family, I feel some delicacy, not being a Floridian, in writing to you on a matter chiefly of a local nature. But, as the whole country has an interest in it, I shall make no apology for presenting it to you.

"I allude to the condition of the old Spanish fortress at St. Augustine, which I consider disreputable to us as a nation. There are numerous reasons why it should be repaired and preserved. Let me state a few of the principal ones:

"1. It is necessary for the defence of St. Augustine, which I regard as a most important position. Suppose us engaged in a war with Great Britain. From the vicinity of St. Augustine to the St. John's River, Savannah, and Charleston, it would afford great facilities for depredation on our coast and on commerce. Although the bar at the mouth of the harbor is in its present state an obstruction, it might by a very little dredging be made a convenient and safe resort for vessels of light draught; and its vicinity to the Bahama Islands would enable the enemy with ease to supply and defend it. I know no point south of Charleston which could be converted to so great annoyance to the whole Southern Atlantic coast. But I need not enlarge on a subject which you understand so much better than myself.

"2. The fort, as a specimen of military art, deserves to be preserved, and put in a state of perfect repair. I have seen few works in any

country better calculated to illustrate on a small scale the theory of scientific fortification. It is rapidly falling into decay, and a few years more of neglect will complete its destruction. The wall over the casemates is worn away, and some of them leak badly, though others are yet perfect, and are used for storing ammunition. A very little expense would arrest this process of dilapidation. The casemates secured from moisture would be perfectly dry, and suited for quarters for a garrison in case of war. The stone of which the fort is constructed seems to be admirably adapted to the purpose. It yields to cannon-balls without breaking into fragments, as may be seen by the indentations made by the batteries of General Oglethorpe.

"3. As an antiquity of extraordinary merit and interest it should be repaired and preserved. I would not incur the expense for this reason alone; but when considerations of utility are so strongly in favor of it, this argument may be urged to strengthen the case. It is one of the few memorials which the discoverers of America have left on the northern part of this continent, and it would be discreditable in the highest degree to us to allow it to perish.

"In a word, as a work of military science and art, as an indispensable protection to St. Augustine, and as a memento of those who preceded us on this portion of the American continent, and to whose enterprise we owe our homes and all the prosperity and greatness which after-ages have in reserve for us, let us preserve this ancient fortress and restore it to its pristine condition. The expense will not be great—not half so much as would be necessary to construct a work of one tithe of its efficiency; and when Congress (I intend no disrespect) is scattering the public treasure with so lavish a hand, is there not every reason to believe that a joint effort on your part may secure an object which is essential to the protection of the Atlantic coast south of Charleston, and in which I feel that the good name of the country is concerned?

"As to the barracks at the other end of the town, the sooner the government can get rid of them the better, especially if they can be applied to any useful purpose. They are in the wrong place, are rapidly decaying, and would not, I think, by supplying any future military want, indemnify us for the expense of keeping them up.

"You will excuse me for bringing this subject before you. Though a New Yorker, I may say (taking a slight liberty with the poet), 'Nihil (Americani).'

"I am, Gentlemen, very truly yours, JOHN A. DIX."

A part of the following year was spent at Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, a delightful summer resort, and even more attractive

in the autumn. The scenery is perfect; the air pure; the prospect diversified. There the Highlands open toward the south, and the broad waters of Newburgh Bay give the idea of an inland lake bordered by stately hills. Next to the house at which we lodged was "Idlewild," the residence of Nathaniel P. Willis. His health was at that time seriously impaired, but his manners and conversation were as charming as ever. My mother and he felt a strong interest in each other, as she was still very delicate, and not yet entirely recovered from the severe illness contracted in Rome. Many pleasant notes came to her from the mansion on the other side of the glen, where the trees made a perpetual twilight above the noisy little stream that flowed below to join the waters of the river. Of these I transcribe one or two:

"Idlewild.

"Dear Mrs. Dix,—The elements have relented toward you this morning, and the south-west wind is good for our mutual consumptions and sorrows. It will be soft and sunny over the hills this afternoon, and I will re-claim your tender complianee of yesterday and call for yourself and daughter at 3 P.M. Please bring all your griefs and shawls to the wagon with you, for I long for sympathy, and wish it to be warm.

"Do not trouble yourself to answer this, unless you are too ill to go.

"Yours very sincerely, N. P. Willis."

"Sunday morning.

"Dear Mrs. Dix,—You have too much of the conception of genius yourself not to be interested in seeing the author's child before birth, and so (by way of announcing my return, alive and well) I enclose you a proof-sheet of my leading article for next week. It is to give me an excuse, also, for announcing to you that I propose to cross Idlewild cataract at 11 A.M., and report to you my voyage of discovery to the mysterious Hon. Mrs. Whyte. Please have your astonishment ready.

"It seems striving to clear off, and will achieve it by noon, I think. Meantime, dear Mrs. Dix, I remain,

"Yours most truly, N. P. Willis."

"Idlewild, Thursday morning.

"My dear Mrs. Dix,—I have a brother named after you (Mr. Richard Willis), and it is *Dick's* intention to be here to dinner to-day. He

is, like his namesake, worth knowing as a variety of the human type, and a gem of his kind; and we have all agreed, therefore, that you and he must not die in ignorance of each other. To prevent this catastrophe I shall be at your door with my wagon at half-past one, this day, and I trust you will let no obstacle prevent my taking charge of you for the remainder of the daylight. I will restore you safely at your own hour of the evening with the family wagon. We shall have some good music after dinner. Believe me, yours most truly,

"N. P. Willis."

During those years in which he was excluded from public life my father gave much time and thought to matters connected with the development of the country. He was actively employed as one of the pioneers in the gigantic enterprise of uniting the Atlantic and Pacific coasts by one continuous line of railway. On withdrawing from politics he accepted an invitation to become President of the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, a post which brought much hard work, with small pecuniary return. It gave him, however, what he most desired, constant occupation, and filled his active mind with large and important subjects. His journeys to and from the West for several years were frequent; and as the work under his immediate observation grew so did his enthusiasm increase, until he saw, by faith, the "Union Pacific Railroad" already an accomplished fact. His speech at Davenport, Iowa, in the month of June, 1854, in response to that of the Mayor of that place, contains his views of the grandeur of the work in which he was engaged. An excursion was made in which some twelve hundred citizens of the East—capitalists, merchants, statesmen, geographers, and scientific men—took part. On returning from St. Anthony's Falls to Davenport they were received with appropriate demonstrations. The Mayor, in addressing them, said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—We invite you to an entertainment on this side the great water. It is not of bread, though we could feed a multitude, and we touch not the wine. You see yonder archway invading the bold shore of old Missis-

sippi, fit monument to the genius Redfield. That is the road to California and the Indies.

"We have harnessed up a horse which, like the fabled steeds of Diomedes, vomiteth fire from his nostrils, and, without grants of land or other aid than your own, we intend to land the first train on the Pacific. We are on a great line. It is not a line dividing states and empires; it is not Mason and Dixon's line, but it is Dix's line to the great West.

"Our train is now ready to start through the Iowa prairies. We have a Dix for a conductor, a Flagg for a financier, Farnam for an engineer, and Sheffield for a fireman, and we have all the men who have been engaged on this road from Chicago to aid us in the enterprise. We wish you to join us, and with such a noble company we shall be at the metropolis of this State in December next, and we invite you to celebrate another such a scene as this in two years on the Missouri.

"Embark in this train, and before our rivals are done talking of their projects we shall have *the* railroad to California's golden sands half finished, and invite them to celebrate the completion of another link in this great chain on the summit of the Rocky Mountains."

In reply General Dix made a speech, from which I take this extract. It shows the cherished purpose of New York and the East:

"We have, as yet, gentlemen, only reached the Mississippi. But the tide of population has flowed far beyond it. Iowa, the great State of which we have merely touched the boundary, one of the youngest of the American sisters, is still west of us. With I know not how many hundred thousand inhabitants — you, fellow-citizens of Iowa, cannot tell yourselves from week to week how many people you have, so rapidly is immigration adding to your numbers — with fifty thousand square miles, and the richest fifty in a body in the whole Union—if the reports of the government surveyors are to be

trusted — no estimate can be formed of the rapidity of her growth or the standard of wealth and strength she is destined to attain. We have come from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River by an uninterrupted line of railroads. If we had come seven months later we could have gone on to Iowa City, nearly sixty miles farther west, by an extension of the same iron track which has brought us here.

"It is unnecessary for me to say to you, fellow-citizens of Iowa, that a railroad is now in progress of construction from Davenport, on the Mississippi, where we now stand, to Council Bluffs, on the Missouri, by the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad Company, for the work is going on under your own eyes. The two rivers are three hundred miles apart. The grading on the first sixty miles will be finished in September, and the rails, which are now arriving in New York, will be laid before the 1st of January next. One hundred and twenty miles more are ready to be put under contract. This road must and will be promptly completed. It is the great highway to Nebraska, and its speedy completion is vitally connected with the future prosperity of that Territory.

"Let it not be supposed that we are to stop at the Missouri River. The character of the country still invites us onward, and we shall go on. Our surveyors and engineers have been beyond Council Bluffs into Nebraska, as far as the Platte or Nebraska River; others have been several hundred miles farther west, and they report that it has the same fertility of soil which enriches Iowa so greatly. Gentlemen, we may as well come to the point at once — *we are on the way to the Pacific; and we intend to go there.* It will require years of perseverance, but the work will be accomplished in good time. I may reasonably expect, with the ordinary chances of life, to live to see it. So long as the same rich soil is spread out before us, we may continue on the line we are now working.

"The country, as it is settled and its productive powers are developed, will furnish the means of sustaining the work.

The State of Iowa now provides all the money to grade the road through her territory by subscriptions within herself. She has not received a single dollar from subscribers on the seaboard. She only asks of the Atlantic States—where her improvements will virtually terminate—to furnish rails and the running apparatus to put the road in operation. The gentlemen who have constructed the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad are engaged in the construction of this, and it is their opinion that the one will be as productive as the other.

"I have said, gentlemen, that we are on the way to the Pacific, and that we may continue on the line we are now working so long as we have the same rich country to traverse —a country which will continue to draw men and means from the East, and especially from New England, 'the Northern hive' of this continent, sending out her legions, not for plunder or conquest, but to extend the arts of civilization, to carry the hardy virtues of the Pilgrims, perpetuated in their descendants, into the pathless wilderness, and make it what the country before our eyes has been made in a quarter of a century of time. Where this great highway to the Pacific is to cross the Rocky Mountains we need not care to know. The question is not an urgent one now. Whether we are to bear north, following the course of the Platte, or incline south, may be settled hereafter; and it must be settled, not by cursory exploration, but by the most careful and minute examinations under the directions of experienced engineers. One thing is certainly desirable—that the States from the Lakes to the southern boundary of Missouri should have a common exodus from the American wilderness, which spreads itself out from the eastern face of the Rocky Mountains.

"The railway companies between the Atlantic and the Mississippi have a common interest, and they should have a common aim. Let them go westward in the respective districts which they are traversing, and when they reach the wilderness beyond the Mississippi and the Missouri they may, by

their combined influence and means, open a common avenue to the Pacific, or more than one, if their western termini must be fixed at different points. A large view of this subject should extinguish all jealousy, which is always bred in narrowness of feeling, and is almost always blind to the very interest it seeks to promote."

The work on the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad was pushed with the rapidity and energy which characterize American enterprises. It was commenced April 10, 1852, and opened to Joliet, 40 miles, October 18 in the same year; to Morris, 61 miles, January 5, 1853; to Ottowa, 83 miles, February 14; to La Salle, 98 miles, March 10; to Peru, 99 miles, March 21; to Tiskilwa, 122 miles, September 12; to Sheffield, 136 miles, October 12; to Geneseo, 158 miles, December 19. This was the first continuous line of railroad to reach the Mississippi River from Lake Michigan. The western extension of the road was the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad; and the bridge connecting the two sections of the road was a good specimen of engineering skill. It is an interesting fact in his life that General Dix should have been connected with these great works, and with the grander project for which they prepared the way. As was observed in a letter to him from Davenport, June 20, 1854, by one engaged in the same enterprise:

"Your earnest and devoted labors are worth to the company a very large amount; and not only so, but they place your name high on the pinnacle of fame in a different line entirely from any one in which you have thus far won a great reputation."

Referring to the work then in progress, General Dix wrote to Mr. Dean, member of Congress, as follows:

"New York, March 21, 1854.

"My dear Sir,—If you have constitutional scruples in respect to grants of lands to States for roads within their own limits, it will not be worth your while to take the trouble to read this letter; but if you re-

gard the question as one of practical propriety, I should be glad to have you inquire into the merits of the Iowa land bill, which, I understand, will be shortly reported by the proper committee in your House. The bill has passed the Senate in strict conformity to the memorial of the Legislature of that State to Congress. It is a clean bill. It will not be pressed on your House or its members by any unworthy appliances, but will be left to stand on its own merits.

"You are, perhaps, aware that a railroad was opened last month from Chicago to Rock Island, on the Mississippi River, and that it has been constructed in an almost incredibly short period by private capital and enterprise. Our friend Mr. Flagg is treasurer. It has cost between four and five millions of dollars. It has been opened by sections, and has actually yielded, on the finished portions, in ten months, over $600,000 in tolls. The receipts the next year will not fall short of a million. This unprecedented success points it out with certainty as the great route to the Mississippi from our own State. A railroad has been commenced in continuation of this from the Mississippi, at Rock Island, to the Missouri, near Council Bluffs. It is in rapid progress, and we hope to open a section by the 1st of June. With the aid of the land bill it can be opened to Iowa City by the 1st of January next, and to the Missouri by the 1st of January, 1856. Over twenty years ago Redfield, who has distinguished himself so much by his scientific writings, particularly in respect to the laws of storms, pointed out this route for the great railway to the Pacific. It is now the principal channel of emigration to districts beyond the Mississippi, and I think is rapidly confirming Redfield's suggestion. It is the line of enterprise and physical power. I have been associated, as President of the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad Company, since its organization ten months ago, with the Iowa gentlemen engaged in it. They are prosecuting it with discretion and vigor, and with clean hands. Thus far the enterprise has been carried on by Iowa capital and credit, and we are preparing to procure the iron by means obtained here.

"I believe the Iowa land bill to have as strong claims on New York as it would have if the lands it appropriates were to be granted to her. I believe the appropriation of the lands to the contemplated improvements in Iowa will be more beneficial to us than any application of the proceeds possibly could be within our own limits. They will penetrate the heart of the richest region in the Union in proportion to its magnitude, and pour its products into the lap of New York. My object in writing to you is to ask your attention to the subject—that is, if you have no conscientious scruples as to such grants—and, if you desire any farther information, the Honorable John P. Cook, a member of your

House, can tell you all about it. If you think favorably of it, I should be happy to have you show this letter to our friends, Messrs. Bishop Perkins, Hughes, Westbrook, Fenton, and any other of our State delegation, if you think proper. I am, dear Sir, sincerely yours,

"JOHN A. DIX.

"Hon. G. DEAN, M. C."

The following letters bear on the same subject:

"Magnolia, Florida, March 14, 1856.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I perceive by the newspapers that Mr. Brown of the Senate, on the 6th instant, reported a bill for the construction of a railroad and telegraph line from the Mississippi River south of latitude 37° to the Pacific at San Francisco. This project cuts off St. Louis and isolates the State of Iowa, so far as a central road to the Pacific is concerned. The phrase 'south of latitude 37°' is very vague; but I take it for granted it is intended to endorse the recommendation of the Secretary of War to adopt the route near the thirty-second parallel.

It strikes me that such a bill would be very unjust to those who have invested so largely in carrying railroads beyond the Mississippi, and who have completed nearly one-half of the entire line from the Atlantic to the Pacific; and if this bill is to pass, it certainly ought to make a similar provision for the route through Iowa, otherwise a severe check may be given to the progress and the ultimate prosperity of your truly noble young State. Under a general view of the subject it is of little consequence through what part of Iowa the great road to the Pacific should pass. But the bridge at Davenport and the completion of the line to Iowa City seem to indicate this as the proper one. I have always thought that the line from Dubuque west should meet us at the Missouri, and that we must go together through the Platte Valley to the South Pass. I am told fifty miles of road are already in operation on the Sacramento, and that the California improvements point to Utah, the South Pass, and the Platte Valley.

"I send you a speech which I made at the Iowa City celebration, and which has been printed in pamphlet form since I left. I considered what I said as intended only for the persons present, and those who were interested in the particular line, of which we had just finished the first section. Had I foreseen that so much prominence would have been given to it, I should have gone more in detail into the subject.

"I really hope this matter will take a right direction, and if the line of 32° must be taken, that the friends of the route through Iowa, Illinois,

Indiana, Pennsylvania, and New York will insist on a grant of 160,000,000 acres of land for that route.

"I write you in haste, and am, dear General, sincerely yours,

"JOHN A. DIX.

"Hon. MR. JONES, U. S. Senate."

"Magnolia, Florida, March 21, 1856.

"DEAR SIR,—I perceive by the newspapers that Mr. Brown introduced into the Senate, on the 6th instant, a bill making provision for a railroad and magnetic telegraph, south of latitute 37°, from the Mississippi River to the Pacific at San Francisco. I consider this movement as an adoption of the line of 32° through the Colorado desert. Such a road for all the purposes of transportation and travel will be nearly useless to the North-western States; and to the line of Chicago and the great Lakes its influence must be positively detrimental. The great route between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans is marked out by natural features too strong to be mistaken. It is from New York by the Hudson River, the remarkable level from Albany to Buffalo, and the Great Lakes, to Chicago, Rock Island, Council Bluffs, the Platte Valley, the South Pass, Utah, and the Sacramento. I have no objection that the Southern States should have 40,000,000 acres of land to aid in the construction of their road, and any allowance for carrying the mail that may be thought reasonable. But every consideration of fairness demands that the same provision should be made at the same time (I mean in the same bill) for the other route. The road through Iowa and Nebraska will pay as fast as it can be constructed; and the local business will sustain it to the end of time. The North-west, the North-east, and the Middle States are all interested in it. I believe it is in your power to put this matter right. I write to you promptly to invite your early attention to the subject; and you will excuse me suggesting that not only great public considerations, but others personal to yourself, render it of the highest importance that this measure should be carried by your efficient aid.

"I made a speech at Iowa City early in January, in which I took a general view of this question. General Jones of Iowa has a copy. It was a dinner speech; and as there were many others to speak, my remarks were necessarily brief. I am at present President of the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad Company, as you will perceive. I have no selfish interest in this matter, my only motive is to see a great public enterprise succeed; and I stand ready to relinquish my position at any moment, if by doing so I can farther the object in view.

"I am passing the winter here on account of my wife's delicate health, and shall be in New York about the middle of April."

The year 1857 was one of varied interest in the present history. I shall first mention the attack on Trinity Church during the session of the Legislature in the beginning of that year, in connection with a statement of the service rendered to the Corporation by my father at that time. But here it may be proper to state the leading facts in his history as a member of the Episcopal Church. Born of a Puritan stock, and brought up under Congregational influences, he has given us in his autobiography the story of his early sentiments on the subject of religion. The questions of man's relation to Almighty God, and the duties consequent upon it, were ever regarded by my father as of the utmost importance. That this was his habit of mind is evident from the fact that, at an age when the thoughts are little inclined to turn seriously to the subject of religion, he asked to be baptized into the Church. He was about twenty years of age, and stationed at Fort Constitution, Portsmouth, N. H., when he received the first of those great sacraments ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of the souls of men. The record is in the register of baptisms in St. John's Church, Portsmouth, of which the Rev. Charles Burroughs was Rector:

"John Adams Dix, an adult, aged 20. Samuel Larkin, Esq., Timothy Upham, Esq., and Mr. Samuel E. Watson were his chosen witnesses."

The date was July 19, 1818.

From that day my father remained a staunch and exemplary member of the Church to whose fold he was then admitted. He was prominent in the congregation of St. Peter's, Albany, as I have already related. He received his first communion in the English Chapel, outside the Porta del Popolo, at Rome, during our residence in that city in the winter of 1843–'44, and he was always a regular and frequent partaker of that holy sacrament to the very end of his life on earth.

On the 12th of November, 1849, General Dix was elected a member of the Vestry of the parish of Trinity Church,

in the city of New York, succeeding his father-in-law, Mr. Morgan, who had been a member of that body for many years. It is hardly necessary to say that he was neither idle nor inactive in that position; his energetic character and practical sagacity found there a new field of exercise, and he became, in course of time, one of the most influential members of the Corporation. His attention was early directed to the financial condition of the parish. For a long series of years the policy had been one of profuse, not to say prodigal, liberality; large sums of money were given away to parishes, colleges, and societies all over the State of New York, and endowments of land were granted to such an extent as seriously to diminish the estate and revennes of the church. If that policy had been pursued, not enough of the estate would have been left to carry on the work of the parish in this city. Perceiving a danger to which his fellow-trustees seemed blind, General Dix resolved to endeavor to secure a change of policy, and thus save the Corporation from deeper embarrassment. He has often told me the story: how he introduced certain resolutions, tending to stop the profuse donations to other bodies, and to restrict gifts to a comparatively narrow compass; how he had difficulty in finding one of the vestry to second his proposed measures; how he urged the new policy of retrenchment and economy year after year, slowly making converts; until, after the lapse of several years, he had the pleasure of finding a majority on his side. His view was this: that the proper field for the use of the wealth of Trinity Church is the city of New York, and especially those districts which other churches have abandoned; that ours should be, first of all, a missionary work among the poor and needy in the forsaken regions of the metropolis; and that no donations, subsidies, or aid of any kind should be made outside the parish limits, until every need within those limits had been supplied. The results of that policy are seen in the vast work, spiritual, educational, and eleemosynary, now carried on in this city under the auspices of the Corporation of

Trinity—a work for which the efforts and perseverance of General Dix did much to prepare the way.

Devoted as he was to the Church, and deeply interested in the success of these designs for the glory of Almighty God and the salvation of the souls of men, it may be imagined with what feelings he regarded the assault on our parish in the year 1857. For nearly two hundred years Trinity Church has been an object of attack; nor is this to be wondered at, considering the jealousy of wealth, and the more aggravated jealousy of ecclesiastical corporations. Moreover, in the case of this estate, as in that of many others, persons have set up claims to the property, and designing men have succeeded in persuading the credulous, and perhaps, at length, themselves, that the Corporation is irreligiously excluding them from the possession of their own. But the attack now referred to was much more serious than any previously made, either by lewd fellows of the baser sort, who lust after gain and seek to lay hands on the wealth consecrated to God's service, or by the crazy dreamers who march under the banner of old Anneke Jans. It was commenced and kept up by some of the best people in the city, by venerable clergymen, and laymen conspicuous for every Christian virtue. Induced by I know not precisely what desires, these persons framed the theory that every member of the Protestant Episcopal Church resident in the city of New York was *ipso facto* a corporator of Trinity Church, and had a right to vote at the annual election for church-wardens and vestrymen, and thus to control her concerns. According to this notion the Rector of the Parish of Trinity Church should be regarded as the Rector of the entire Protestant Episcopal population of the city; and they must be regarded as members of his parish, with a right in its government; and the Easter elections must be decided by a levy *en masse*, at the head of Broadway and Wall Street, of the members of all the parishes, which, in fact, seem to have been considered as mere parts of one stupendous whole. Accordingly a bill was introduced into the Legisla-

ture, the effect of which would have been to overthrow the existing system, to give the property into the hands of persons not connected with our parish, and to secure—what many conscientiously regarded as desirable—the complete undoing, overthrow, and destruction of the oldest corporation in this city, and the division of its lands and property among a crowd of hungry organizations, some of which had sprung from its own bowels, and many of which were the recipients of its steady and free benefactions.*

It seems a marvellous thing that such men as the Rev. Dr. Muhlenberg of the clergy, and Mr. Robert B. Minturn of the laity, could have been carried away by these notions and become the advocates of the scheme of spoliation. I shall not trace the history of the attack, as it went from stage to stage in the Legislature, nor relate the particulars of its final defeat; it suffices to add that the Corporation found one of its ablest champions in General Dix. Called to appear before a Committee of the Senate, but supposing at the time that it would be impossible for him to do so, he prepared a communication to be submitted to them. This communication was sent to Albany by one of his associates in the Vestry; but the sessions of the Committee continuing longer than was expected,

* This bill, which was presented in the Senate, March 25, 1857, and which, as its distinguished mover then stated, emanated from a rector of one of the largest parishes in the city of New York, numbering upward of six hundred communicants, provided means whereby all the inhabitants of this city, to whatever parish belonging, should vote, by representatives, five from each parish, at the annual election for churchwardens and vestrymen of Trinity Church. It farther provided for the management of the financial affairs of the Corporation, by instructing the Vestry of Trinity how they must, for the future, apply their income; and it required an annual report from them to every parish of the city, in which they should give, as to their masters, an account of their stewardship. There are occasions when one is driven to the use of vulgar terms to characterize actions; and, after due examination of this bill, I cannot avoid describing it as one of the most prodigious specimens of "cheek" within my recollection.

he was able to appear in person, and read his paper as a part of his testimony. It was subsequently printed in pamphlet form, and may be found in the Appendix to the present work. I have only to add that it received the highest encomiums from such theologians and canonists as Drs. Samuel Seabury and Francis L. Hawks, who regarded it as unanswerable, and that it did unquestionably produce a powerful effect in deciding the fate of the bill. The document is particularly valuable, because it contains the views of General Dix relating to the mission of Trinity Church and the duty of its custodians, and shows that the principles which he advocated so strenuously in the financial administration of the State and general governments were deemed by him of equal soundness in their application to the affairs of the Church.

It is proper to notice at this point the aid rendered to the Corporation by the Right Rev. Dr. Potter, Bishop of New York. At a critical hour he addressed the clergy and laity of his diocese in a letter worthy the chief custodian of the interests of the Church and religion in this great centre of activity and intelligence. The letter is here given in full:

"*To the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of New York:*

"BRETHREN,—Extraordinary efforts have been made of late, in several quarters, to turn popular feeling against the venerable Corporation of Trinity Church in this city. The public Press has been enlisted; the report of a Special Committee of the Senate, made up of partial and insufficient materials, and filled with erroneous views, has been industriously circulated far and wide; private influence has been employed at the capital of the State; and it is believed that the object of all these agencies is to surround the Legislature of the State with such a pressure, with such a clamorous expression of popular feeling, as will constrain it to some aggressive measure against a Church whose only crime is that she has property, and that, with all her giving and spending for pious uses, she does not give and spend quite in the way, or quite to the extent, that certain persons desire!

"While so many influential persons are laboring, by partial statements, to exasperate the public mind, and to prepare the representatives of the people for lawless acts, I should feel myself unworthy of my high office if I did not step forth to warn and entreat you not to allow yourselves to

be drawn inconsiderately into movements which, whatever their authors may think, can only tend to violent and illegal issues.

"But for local and fugitive circumstances of recent date, it is believed that no respectable body of persons would ever have been found to question these two propositions:

"1st. That the title of Trinity Church to her property is unquestionable.

"2d. That it was the intention of the original charter, as it has always been the practice, to confide to the members of the parish, and to those only, the privilege of electing her wardens and vestrymen.

"To attack her property, therefore, or to attempt to dictate to her what she shall do with her property, is the same in principle as to attack the property of a private individual, or to attempt to dictate to him what use he shall make of it.

"Those who have been within her Vestry have seen that she has labored hard to serve the cause of religion and learning. She has assisted two hundred churches in the State; she has provided free education in schools and colleges and theological seminaries for the poor; she has prevented the whole of the lower part of this city from becoming a moral waste; she has four large churches where no other churches would remain. Besides parting with a portion of her original estate, she has ventured beyond her income in her forwardness to do good, and has thereby incurred a large debt! In a rehearing of the case these facts are now coming out before the Special Committee of the Senate. They are facts well known to all who have been conversant with the doings of Trinity Church. The public will in due time see and recognize the truth, and will interpose to protect the rights of property and the characters of good and faithful men.

"I flatter myself that the Churchmen of the Diocese of New York will, for the most part, be too considerate and too temperate—too much the friends of public order and public justice—to allow their influence to be pressed into the cause of oppression and violence.

"HORATIO POTTER,
"Provisional Bishop of New York.

"New York, February 23, 1857."

This communication from the eminent prelate fell like a bombshell into the camp of the enemy. A meeting of clergy and laity was held, at which violent expressions were used by certain prominent Rectors of the city, one saying that "the day had gone by when the *ipse dixit* of a Bishop was

to weigh with the Church;" and another declaring his opinion that "the Bishop was not responsible for the letter, but that he probably affixed his signature to it while under the influence of chloroform administered by one of the Vestry." The meeting, which had been called previously to the appearance of the Bishop's letter, broke up in confusion, after proceedings so disorderly as to resemble those of a political caucus; and an intelligent gentleman who was present gave it as his conclusion, after what he had seen, that, even if Trinity Church had no legal right to the exclusive control of the property, it would be better that it should remain in her hands than fall into those of the persons at that meeting, since, if they were to undertake the management of the affairs of the parish, the disaster of Pandora's box would be repeated, and things would end in confusion worse confounded. It is due to the venerable Bishop of New York to say that to him belongs the honor of striking the first decisive blow at a conspiracy of a most serious character, which threatened vested rights and religious interests, and which, if successful, would have wrought infinite mischief among us, and ended in destroying the most valuable and important endowment in the Episcopal Church.

The motives actuating the promoters of this agitation were as diverse as their character and principles. Some conscientiously believed that all the inhabitants of the city in communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church were, by virtue of the original charter, corporators of the parish; some desired to relieve their own parishes from embarrassment by the spoils of the venerable mother; some hated Trinity Church because of her wealth and honors; some detested and dreaded her for her High-Church principles; and some were mere adventurers, going in for everything from which they might hope to draw personal advantage.

The excitements of that year were not confined to ecclesiastical circles; a spirit of lawlessness and disorganization seemed to be in the air. There were riots in the city during the sum-

mer. On the 16th of June, as our crack regiment, the Seventh, was on the march down Broadway, to take the steamer at 4 P.M. for an excursion to Boston, orders were given to halt opposite the City Hall, and then to take forcible possession of that edifice. The Mayor, Fernando Wood, suddenly found himself a prisoner; the City Hall was garrisoned by the National Guard. There were at that time two sets of police, each claiming to be the lawful guardians of our public peace. Between them occurred desperate collisions, while the citizens, wild with excitement, found their safety due, for the nonce, to bayonets and field-pieces. On the 4th day of July following there was bloody work in the Five Points. The rioting continued during Sunday, the 5th, and the city was again preserved from mob violence by the Seventh Regiment, which, together with the Eighth and Seventy-first, repressed the fury of the rabble, marching through the dangerous districts, closing up shops, scattering crowds, and arresting ringleaders. Those were exciting days for us, who could not leave the city, and were kept in continual suspense, passing from one crisis to another. All tragedies, however, have their dash of comedy; and, looking back to those times, I recall a certain odd character, by name Stephen H. Branch, who flitted constantly before the public eye, acting the part of a clown or jester, though, no doubt, with serious intent. He was a man of good education and some abilities, and had a command of language which made me often regard him as a kind of combination of Carlyle and Ruskin in the state of lunacy, if such a thing can be imagined. Take, for example, his proclamation proposing himself as a candidate for the office in which Fernando Wood had so distinguished himself; it is one of innumerable squibs emanating from the same eccentric genius. We used to read them with eagerness for their delicious absurdity, and I remember the General's delight at the awful threat of assuming "doubtful powers:"

"I have been far out beyond the remotest bounds of civilized beings, and have scaled bolder cliffs and higher peaks

than Alps reflected in the placid waters of Switzerland. From bewildering heights I beheld the gorgeous scenery of the vales, and the eagle on his mighty throne, gilded by the moon and her pretty children of the firmament, while the music of the winds and birds and rivulets, and the mountain fragrance, and the glories of the morning and evening sun, filled my soul with supernatural joy. I exchanged these pure and tranquil solitudes for the vice and tumult of the plains, and now proclaim myself a candidate for Mayor of New York, subject to the decision of the people. If elected I will toil and sweat to reduce the taxes from seven-and-a-half to five millions a year, which will give bigger mouthfuls, more commodious apartments, and better apparel to the people. If I fail to reduce the taxes, I will blow the City Hall and its thieves into a million fragments. And if I fail to render life and property more secure, I will drown the entire Police Department in the dog-pond. I will also drive every alien from office with American bayonets. This is only a sample of what I will do. In a word, I will assume doubtful powers, for the public good. I am in the field, and all the threats and money of the earth shall not allure nor drive me from it. To death only will I yield. Up, then, Americans, and charge for a Mayor who will change the sad aspect of these times."

During the summer of this year the house on Manursing Island was sold. On the 20th of August we left it, to return no more: the sad associations connected with the place tempered the regret of parting. After that time the General spent his summers on his beloved Long Island, excepting when absent from the United States. The autumn of 1857 found him established in the city of New York, and occupying a house in Thirty-first Street, near Broadway. His youngest son, Charles Temple Dix, was pursuing his studies as a landscape painter. The General watched his progress daily, with the hope of seeing him among the first marine painters of the day. This, like many other aspirations, was

destined to extinction, through the fatal influence of that cruel war of which the presages were becoming more definite from year to year.

The attention of the reader must be directed once more to the unedifying spectacle of party strife. The policy pursued during the administration of General Pierce resulted in widening the breach between the North and the South. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise was resented at the North, and bitterly denounced as destructive of the hope of better days, and indicating the determination of the propagandists of slavery either to rule the whole country or to break up the Union. This feeling was deepened by the proceedings of the notorious Conference at Ostend, which looked to the acquisition of Cuba, either by purchase or by force, in order to prevent the emancipation of the blacks in that island—a measure already projected by Spain—and to hold the island as a fountain of supply of slaves and a market for their sale. Then followed, in the month of May, the outrage in the Senate House—perpetrated by Preston Brooks of South Carolina on Charles Sumner of Massachusetts—a brutal act, which still more embittered Northern men. About that time the Republican party came to its birth. The Whigs, as an organization, had ceased to exist, though a remnant held together under the name of "Know-nothings." But these were soon to be absorbed by that great political power which was destined to rule the future with an iron sway.

General Dix supported the Democratic candidates, James Buchanan and John C. Breckinridge, in the canvass of 1856: he did not, however, take an active part in the contest. John C. Fremont and William L. Dayton were nominated by the new political organization, by way of distinct menace to the South; and Millard Fillmore and Andrew J. Donelson represented the Know-nothings. The position and views of General Dix at that particular time may be understood from some letters which follow, and from two communications addressed to Mr. Buchanan, the one before, the other after, his election:

"New York, June 13, 1856.

"Dear Sir,—I have just returned from the West. I heard at Chicago, with unfeigned gratification, of your nomination. It has relieved the sound and considerate portion of the community of all parties from a good deal of uneasiness. The ratification meetings now in progress in this State are bringing together the men who have been most active in keeping us, for the last six years, in a perpetual ferment. The work in the counties—which is to tell on the result of the canvass—will commence in a few weeks, and it will give me great pleasure to contribute my best efforts to its success, which I look forward to with confidence.

"I am compelled to return to Iowa next week (about the 20th), but shall be back early in July. I am, dear Sir, truly yours,

"John A. Dix.

"Hon. Jas. Buchanan."

"New York, June 17, 1856.

"Gentlemen,—Your invitation to address the meeting of the united Democracy of the city and county of Rochester on the evening of the 19th inst., to ratify the nominations for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency at Cincinnati by the delegated Democracy of the Union, and to respond to the declarations of principle and policy made by the Convention, was duly received.

"Concurring, as I do cordially, in the nominations and in the leading declarations by which they were accompanied, I regret that engagements here will deprive me of the pleasure of accepting your invitation. I hope, however, to be able, at an early period of the canvass, to take an active part in it.

"I consider the nomination of Mr. Buchanan a very fortunate one, both for the Democracy and the country; and I look with confidence to his ability, experience, and sound judgment for a satisfactory adjustment of the disturbing questions by which the public peace is endangered. Firmness, moderation, good-sense, and fearlessness in the discharge of public duties are always indispensable to the administration of our government, representing, as it does, so great a variety of interests; and they are pre-eminently so at the present juncture. Few public men are as much distinguished for these qualities as Mr. Buchanan; and he combines with them a thorough knowledge of public affairs, foreign as well as domestic. Believing him to be able, honest, and equal to any emergency likely to arise in the administration of the government, I shall give the Democratic ticket a cordial support.

"I am, Gentlemen, truly yours, John A. Dix.

"Messrs. Isaac Butts, etc."

"Philadelphia, September 11, 1856.

"Dear Sir,—The Democracy of Eastern Pennsylvania, and all other friends of the Constitution, will hold a monster mass meeting in Independence Square, Philadelphia, on Wednesday, the 17th instant, being the anniversary of the adoption of that great charter of American liberty.

"In fulfilment of a pleasing duty as Chairman of the Democratic Central Committee, and conscious of your eminent ability as a friend and champion of the Constitution, I most earnestly ask your attendance on that great occasion. Yours truly,

"J. W. Forney,

"Chairman of Democratic Central Com. of Pennsylvania."

"New York, September 15, 1856.

"Dear Sir,—Your favor is just received, inviting me to attend a monster mass meeting of the Democracy of Eastern Pennsylvania, and all other friends of the Constitution, in Independence Square, Philadelphia, on 'the 17th instant, being the anniversary of the adoption of that great charter of American liberty.'

"I regret exceedingly that an engagement to address a Democratic meeting in this State will deprive me of the pleasure of accepting the invitation. No one can venerate more than myself the profound wisdom and the spirit of conciliation in which the Constitution of the United States had its birth, or appreciate more keenly the vital necessity of maintaining all its provisions with scrupulous fidelity. It is only through such a strict adherence to it that we can hope to preserve the union of the States. I have never for a moment doubted that the people would be faithful to all its requirements, and frown with indignation on every attempt, from whatever quarter it may come, to dissever the Confederated States, and to inflict upon us and the cause of popular government throughout the world the greatest of calamities. And though clouds darken our horizon now, I look forward to the election of the distinguished Pennsylvanian, whom the Democracy of the Union have chosen for their standard-bearer, as the dawn of that brighter day which is to succeed and dissipate them. The pleasure of attending the meeting of his political friends at the great emporium of his State would be greatly enhanced by the opportunity of bearing testimony by my presence to the importance of the day which they have selected for the purpose; and it is with great regret that I am compelled to relinquish it.

"I am, dear Sir, truly yours, John A. Dix.

"J. W. Forney, Esq."

"New York, November 19, 1856.

"My dear Sir,—I hope you will not take it amiss if I say a few words to you in regard to the condition of our political affairs, which in

the Northern section of the Union are very unsatisfactory. Still, I believe it to be not only possible, but comparatively easy, to regain the ascendency we have lost. This, I think, is mainly to be effected by giving us different issues—not new ones, but issues as old as the Democratic party itself.

"I consider the slavery question settled, and I think it should be ignored. The Kansas-Nebraska Act is simply to be enforced, and this is a mere matter of ordinary executive duty.

"When General Pierce came into office I pressed on him the adoption of a system of thorough commercial and financial reform by means of a modification of the tariff and a reduction of the revenue; and I have for years believed that this could be effected mainly by adding to the free list foreign products not coming into competition with our own, thus avoiding any injurious interference with our domestic industry. This subject has composed the chief staple of my speeches during the two last canvasses for the Presidency; and I have feared at times my friends might think me in a little danger of becoming monomaniacal. I believe, however, the great body of the Democracy throughout the Union feel as deep an interest in the subject as I do, and think, like myself, that our enormous surplus revenue is corrupting Congress. If your administration is placed upon this ground, I have not the slightest doubt that you will rally around you the larger and better portion of the great political parties in all sections of the Union, and that they will bring to your support a weight of popular confidence which will enable you to carry out successfully not only the measures referred to, but any others which you may deem essential to the welfare of the country, and which are undeniably within the pale of the constitutional authority of the government. In a word, I am sure it is in your power to organize an administration which shall be alike honorable to yourself and the country. If you agree with me in regard to the necessity of such a commercial reform as I suggest, is there any man who is likely to be as serviceable to you in maturing and carrying it out as Mr. Walker? Is there any man who in that department would be more acceptable to the commercial classes and the friends of financial reform? I think not. There is no one who has given so much thought to this subject in all its complicated details, as you well know from your intimate association with him while he was framing the Tariff Bill of 1846. You are sure his views are sound; it is not absolutely certain that those of any other man would be equally so; and the Treasury Department is the one of all others in which a safe man is required, independent as it is, in some respects, of the head of the government. I hope you will excuse these suggestions. They are dictated by a sincere and disinterested desire that your admin-

istration may be a successful and distinguished one; and I can say with the same sincerity that I have no other wish than to see you call around you in organizing it the men best qualified to be serviceable to you, and best calculated by their reputation for talents, integrity, and moderation to command the public confidence.

"I write this letter *currente calamo* at the sick-bed of one of my children. You will, therefore, excuse it, and pardon also, in consideration of the motive, the liberty I have taken in alluding at all to a subject of so much delicacy as the organization of your Cabinet.

"I am, dear Sir, with sincere regards, yours, JOHN A. DIX.

"Hon. JAS. BUCHANAN.

"P.S.—The suggestion in respect to the Treasurer is made on the supposition that the present incumbent has determined, independently of any wish of your own, to leave it at the close of General Pierce's administration."

General Dix held no official position under President Buchanan during the first three years of his administration. He passed those years in private life, and in congenial occupation as a man of business and of letters. It was not until the year 1860 that he was recalled to the service of the public, under circumstances which I shall proceed to relate in the following section of this biography.

VIII.

POSTMASTER OF NEW YORK.—SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

A.D. 1860-1861.

The New York Post-office.—Isaac V. Fowler.—General Dix as Postmaster.—Resists System of Assessment for Political Purposes.—Letter to André Froment.—Reception of Prince of Wales, 1860.—Review of History of Parties.—Republican Party.—Secession.—Question of Slavery with Reference to General Government.—Review of the Course of General Dix on the Slavery Question, and Conclusions.—His Paramount Desire the Preservation of the Union.—Slavery a Secondary Question in Comparison.—Autumn Elections of 1860.—Sympathy with the South.—Autograph Memorandum on Events between 1861 and 1865.—Election of Abraham Lincoln.—"Confederate States of America," February 4, 1861.—Efforts to Avert the War.—"The Pine Street Meeting."—Address to the People of the South.—Financial Embarrassment of the Government.—Appointed Secretary of the Treasury.—At the White House.—Action Relating to Custom-houses, Light-houses, Mint, Hospitals, Revenue-cutters, in the Seceding States.—History of the Famous Despatch about the American Flag.—Major Anderson at Fort Sumter.—Sensational Story about a "Cabinet Scene."—Close of Mr. Buchanan's Administration.—Return to New York.—Reception at City Hall.—Other Compliments and Honors.

VIII.

It was discovered, during the early part of the year 1860, that great frauds had been committed in the New York Post-office, and that the Postmaster, Mr. Isaac V. Fowler, was a defaulter to a large amount. The disclosures caused a feeling of unusual public excitement, and even of personal alarm: they were regarded as an illustration and result of the demoralizing tendency of the prevailing system of public appointments. Rumor magnified the evil; the journals of the day raised a hue-and-cry against the entire corps of the Post-office, which filled every one connected with the department with trepidation. The general government found itself gravely compromised; the accusations of its opponents were incessant and violent; and it was obvious that the adverse current of popular feeling could only be withstood and checked by the appointment of some person as Postmaster about whose reputation and ability no question could be raised. At such a crisis the day of the mere politician is at an end; a man of integrity and unsullied honor, a man of the highest moral grade, is demanded. The President, in this emergency, called on General Dix, and earnestly requested his acceptance of the post. His name was sent to the Senate on the 17th of May, and the nomination was unanimously confirmed, without the usual reference.

In accepting the position thus tendered to him, under circumstances peculiarly honorable and complimentary, General Dix bade farewell, for many years, to the tranquillity of the domestic circle and the quiet of the retired citizen. His appointment was regarded with universal satisfaction as one of

the best that could have been made. The field for the display of executive ability was an ample one, and he possessed the confidence and esteem of the business community.

Twenty-one years after that date the memory of the General is still warmly cherished in the New York Post-office, and men who knew him then as their honored and beloved chief delight in recalling incidents of his vigorous, wise, and kindly administration. I have had no greater pleasure, while engaged in compiling this hurried record, than in gathering information respecting those days from such men as Postmaster James, the venerable Mr. Forrester, Messrs. Yeoman, Bradley, Dunton, and others of the staff. Their statements to me ran somewhat as follows (I give them nearly in the language of the narrators, and therefore place them in quotation marks):

"When he went into the Post-office he found it in a state of alarm and uneasiness, no one knowing what was to come, and many supposing that a complete sweep would be made, without regard to merit or demerit, by way of satisfying public opinion and exhibiting a specimen of thorough reform. General Dix, however, reassured them, promising a radical investigation of everything connected with the service, but guaranteeing justice to every man; and he kept his word. No one was turned off except for incompetency or neglect. To each one who came inquiring if he might hope to remain the same answer was made: 'As long as you attend to your business properly you shall stay here while I do.'

"He made it his first business to master the details of the service. He looked into all matters, great or small; nothing escaped his attention. The men said that no one had ever asked so many questions before. He would give no order until he understood everything that it involved. He introduced improvements in the method of cancelling stamps and in that of making out the way-bills, in requiring a careful comparison of the bills, and in counting the letters. He was the first to pay off the employés by checks payable to

his own order, by which means he compelled every employé to appear before him personally for the needed endorsement, thus becoming acquainted with every man under his direction, and breaking up certain dishonest practices; for it is said that a considerable number of checks thus made out were never presented to him, their holders fearing detection. This system has been in use in the Post-office ever since. In some of his practical reforms he met with opposition. Men said that what he wished could not be done; upon which he would take hold with his own hands and do it, shaming them into compliance. Every honest man liked him and felt safe in his charge; the dishonest silently disappeared. Nor was he inattentive to their morals. When he wanted information he went to the men who did the work, and not to the heads of departments or superintendents of sections. It created some jealousy, but it gave him what he desired—a personal acquaintance with the entire force. Hearing of one man in particular who was addicted to profanity, he sent for him and said, 'It is related that General Washington sometimes swore, and that General Jackson also did; but I have never found the need of it, and I request you to discontinue it.' That was the end of swearing. He was always kind and courteous, even to those in the lowest positions—to the porters and the errand-boys."

But if there is one thing more strongly impressed upon the memory of his old force than another, it is his resolute conduct in defending them from the extortions of the politician-assessor. He found a system of political taxation, every employé being expected to pay a certain percentage of his salary for party purposes, with the tacit understanding that if he refused he would lose his place. The General was particularly incensed at this custom, and set himself to break it up. When the party assessors came to him as usual, asking for a list of the men under his charge, with a memorandum of the wages of each, he peremptorily refused it, and forbade them to solicit subscriptions in a place in which, as he said, every

one's time belonged to the government. He farther addressed a circular to his men, telling them that if they chose to subscribe they might do so, but that if they refused to do so it should make no difference with him, so long as they were honest and faithful in their work. His proceedings in this respect greatly increased his popularity. His noble words to the Committee of Assessment were heard and reported everywhere:

"Gentlemen, the force in this office is the hardest worked and the poorest paid under the government. It is an outrage to exact from their small pittances the means to defray the expenses of campaigns; and, as long as I am Postmaster, not one cent shall be levied on them for political purposes."

I believe that his action in this particular was unprecedented in the political annals of this city; and, that his views on the subject may be the more clearly understood, I give them in the shape of a letter thoroughly characteristic of the man:

"Post-office, New York, October 15, 1860.

"*André Froment, Esq.*,

"*Chairman of the Democratic General Committee:*

"SIR,—I have received your letter soliciting a contribution from myself, and the privilege of assessing the subordinates in my office, to raise funds in aid of the 'Union ticket' and 'the coming Presidential election.'

"Before your letter was received I had engaged to contribute as large a sum as I can afford in aid of that ticket, and it is hardly necessary for me to add that I shall support it cordially by all efforts in my power.

"In regard to an assessment on the subordinates in this office, I annex extracts from a letter written by me a few weeks ago in reply to a similar application from another organization:

"'I may say of a majority of them (the clerks in this office) that the assessments (proposed to be made) on them cannot be paid without pinching their families, who are utterly dependent on their salaries. I cannot consent to be the instrument of wringing from their necessities means absolutely indispensable to their daily wants. I think, moreover, that this system of assessing subordinates in public offices for political purposes, when they have for the most part no more than is sufficient to give their families the common necessaries of life, is all wrong. If men of means—lawyers, farmers, merchants, capitalists—whose property has

so deep a stake in the maintenance of good government, will not consent to pay the legitimate expenses of our elections, we may as well abandon all hope of keeping up our organizations by money.

"'Let me add that my contributions are made by me as a private citizen, and that I do not recognize the right of any committee to assess me as a Federal officer for political purposes.'

"I must refer you to these extracts for an answer to your letter.

"I deem it proper to add that I know nothing more degrading to our public offices and those who fill them than the practice which has existed of sending political tax-gatherers to the doors of the pay-room, to levy contributions on the clerks as they emerge with their hard-earned stipends. I cannot allow this office to be so dishonored. I intend, if I can, to restore it to the respectability which belonged to the earlier and better days of the Republic. I shall be pleased to have my subordinates contribute voluntarily whatever they think they can afford to the support of the Democratic cause. But I cannot permit any forced contribution to be laid on them. On the contrary, I shall regard it as my duty to protect them from a system of political extortion disgraceful alike to the government and the country."

The administration of the New York Post-office was brought to the highest state of efficiency yet reached under the management of Colonel Thomas L. James, now deservedly promoted to the place of a Cabinet Minister. I have it from himself that many of the improvements introduced by him had their origin in the policy and suggestions of his predecessor, General Dix.

I ask the indulgence of the reader for introducing at this point an episode of a totally different character. In the autumn of this year Trinity Church saw for the first time a surpliced choir within its walls. For a long while the singers —men and boys—transferred from the organ-gallery over the front-door, had occupied benches in the chancel; but we could not obtain the Rector's consent to put them into the proper cathedral dress. It was a motley band of spirits, black, blue, and gray, with garments of divers patterns and variegated neck-ties, that the congregation beheld, Sunday after Sunday, between themselves and the altar. A generous layman had presented us with a full set of vestments, to be used when the

good time should come; but these were locked up in a cupboard, salted down and carefully preserved, biding some halcyon moment. At length it came, ushered in by no less a personage than Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, who arrived in New York on Thursday, October 11, 1860, and presently signified his intention to go to Trinity Church on the Sunday following. The announcement led to great results. We knew that the choral service would be fairly well sung, but we also knew that it would never do to parade our Falstaffian company in their secular costumes before his Royal Highness. So, seizing the opportunity, General Dix and another of the Vestry waited on the venerable Dr. Berrian, then Rector, and obtained his consent that the choir should, for that occasion only, be permitted to wear the surplices, in case of the Prince's being disturbed by the sight of their incongruous and varied toilets. It is hardly necessary to add that the surplices once on, were on for good and all. The congregation could never endure the sight of the secular dress again in the holy place, and thus, somewhat notably, it came about that, as we owe our endowments to the Crown of England, so we are indebted to the Royal Family for another good turn, in getting our singers "decently habited," some time before it was deemed possible. To do justice to the good old Rector, no one was more delighted than he: at heart he was in favor of all that we now have and enjoy; but he was far advanced in years, and timid, and lived under the bondage which has daunted so many in their time—the dread of criticism and the fear of bigots.

I approach with reluctance the terrible scene of the opening of the war for the Union. I desire that the position of General Dix during those exciting days should be clearly understood; that it should be made quite plain what he was and what he was not; what were his views as to the possibility of averting the fatal conflict; what was his faith in those trying hours; and what thought was uppermost in his heart when the storm did finally burst on the land. For this pur-

pose let me briefly review the transactions of some previous years with reference to that political organization with which he had been connected during the whole of his public life.

The repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, in the year 1854, was substantially the death-blow to the old historical Democratic party. It re-opened the question of slavery; it was the beginning of a schism never to be healed. The effort of the Democratic leaders in the North was to hold the party together as long as possible, and so retain control of the government. But to this end it was necessary to make concessions to the Southern Democracy which were denounced by a great number of the people of the North. On this side the Republican party was growing up out of the disintegration of the Whig and other organizations; on the other side men were clamoring for Southern independence. The Union Democrats had a part to act which could hardly have been more difficult: to resist the growth of Republican ideas and to keep the fire-eaters quiet. They played it with consummate skill, but in the end they failed. They were held in check at the North by a feeling which they could not disregard, and with which, no doubt, many of their own number were in sympathy; for opposition to the extension of slavery was a genuine Democratic tradition; and yet the pressure on them from the South grew daily heavier, with louder threats of secession unless the North should accede to their full demands. This was the position of the Democratic leaders during the seven years which included the administration of Mr. Buchanan, and were rudely terminated by the proceedings at Montgomery. Their defeat and destruction as a national party were due to the Southern chiefs, in whose hands the Union men of that part of the country were like children in the grasp of a maniac.

The Secessionists had already announced that they should consider the election of Mr. Lincoln, if it occurred, as the signal for the development of their designs. It did occur,

and they kept their word. But their fatal error was that of resorting to violence. There is reason to believe that they could have obtained by peaceable measures what they desired. Never did men make a greater blunder. Their attack on the government instantly obliterated party distinctions; its effect was to divide by a new line the country for or against the Union. The subject of slavery was dropped for the time; men forgot all else in enthusiasm for the country and the flag. The war, when it began, was not an abolitionists' war; it had no reference to the black man; its sole object was to maintain the National Government and the union of the States. On that question the Northern Democrats were strong and united: they became War Democrats; they led the movement by word, by pen, with money, and sword in hand. The madness of the Southern extremists forced them into that position. Their action was not inconsistent. Their effort had been to preserve the Union; for that they had made great sacrifices; they had conceded to the South all that they could, and even more than they ought to have yielded. They had compromised themselves in the hope of conciliation; they had gone to the verge and last extreme—but in vain. When, in spite of these efforts, they found themselves set at naught, disregarded, and treated as imbeciles and fools, they had a right to feel the indignation which they openly expressed. And when at last the National Government was defied, its officers attacked, and its flag torn down, they had but one course—to fly to arms. The acts of the Southern leaders drove them to that position.

Underneath this the Power was working which rules in the affairs of men and mysteriously orders all things in heaven and earth. It is difficult to see how the country could ever have been at rest while slavery remained among us, or how slavery could have been abolished without a civil war. It had been from the very beginning the *crux* of our existence. It was the subject of debate and agitation in 1784, in 1787, in 1819–'20, in 1848, in 1850, in 1854—always and every-

where. It was a shadow overhanging the march of the nation, ever threatening storm, and

"Darkening the dark lives of men."

Slavery must be destroyed before there could be peace. But slavery could not be destroyed except by the power of the National Government. That power could not have been exerted for that purpose in time of peace: a state of war was necessary before it could so act: and that must be a home war, not a war with a foreign nation. Such a state of war—the indispensable preliminary to the destruction of the institution of Slavery by the United States Government—was brought about by those who madly attempted a violent secession. If they had not attacked the United States Government there could have been no war. If there had been no war the United States Government could not have abolished slavery. If slavery had not been abolished, and the impossibility of getting rid of it had become a quiet, settled conviction, there would have been a peaceable separation; the South would have asked it, and the Democratic party would have led the North in assenting, though with sorrow, to the request. That solution of the question was rendered impossible by the course taken by the Secessionists. Even then years passed before the under current became an upper one. The war, at first, was not an abolition movement. Strict orders were given to our generals not to meddle with slavery in any way; and so things went on. But it is said that bayonets can think. It took some time for the Army to perceive that unless slavery were destroyed their work must fail. When that became perfectly clear slavery was doomed. When the question was fairly put which should live, Slavery or the United States Government, the answer was prompt, and slavery vanished like wax in a burning, fiery furnace.

These considerations explain the position of my father and many others of like mind in those trying and terrible days. He was, as he had been from his youth, a Democrat by con-

viction: he believed in the party, and gave his energies to its cause. The movement of 1848 was disapproved by him; he thought it unwise, predicted its failure, and was connected with it only under the pressure of influences to which it was no dishonor to yield. He was firm in his opposition to slavery; he was not less firm in asserting the constitutional rights of the Southern people. He knew that those rights could only be secured by the maintenance of the Union; and therefore, for the sake of North and South alike, he strove for it with all his heart. He yielded to the stress of necessity as times grew worse, and in his horror of disunion was willing to give up to the South at a later period, for the sake of preserving the national existence, what at an earlier period he would have refused. Above all else, however, next to God, he loved the country and the flag—that flag under which he had marched to the field as a commissioned officer at the age of fifteen, and which, in his last hours, he ordered to be wrapped about his coffin instead of a pall. He felt for his Southern friends and companions, appreciated their trials, extenuated their faults, and labored with marvellous patience and forbearance to calm their angry mood and bring them to a better mind. He never was an abolitionist; he opposed the nascent party which the South held in such dread; he did everything in his power to avert the final catastrophe; he would have given his vote for a peaceful dissolution of the old compact, had that ordeal been demanded. But when the question was reduced to that simple, lucid proposition presented by the leaders of Secession arrayed in front of Fort Sumter, he had but one answer, and he gave it with an emphasis that could not have been stronger, and in words which were as the lightning coming out of the east and shining even unto the west.

And here, as well as anywhere else, I may say what ought perhaps to be said on the question of my father's consistency to his principles, as regards that subject which turned our world upside down. The only part of his history about

which there might be misunderstanding among those who thoroughly trusted and believed in him is that which relates to his connection with the agitation about slavery. I have, therefore, made that part of his life the subject of careful study and long reflection, solicitous, not only to refute invidious criticism, if it should be attempted, but also to ascertain, for my own satisfaction, what was his precise position, and what was the working of his mind during those vexing and unquiet years. The results of that investigation I now present. My analysis may not be correct, but it seems so to me, and the light is, at any rate, the clearest that I can obtain.

A man's actions, if questions arise concerning them, must be interpreted by the motives which appear to have influenced him most strongly. But those in my father's case were the love of country and devotion to the American Union and Constitution. About this there can be, I think, no reasonable doubt. He considered the Federal Constitution as the greatest achievement of the human mind in the field of political science, and regarded the American nation as fortunate above all others in their system of government. To the maintenance of that system, as bequeathed to us by our forefathers, he postponed all other questions. He did not regard it as perfect; he looked on slavery as a blot upon it; but he expected with confidence the time when that blot would disappear—it was a transient and temporary evil, destined to pass away under the slow but irresistible working of natural laws. While the evil existed it must be accepted as one for which the nation was not responsible; to interfere with it by legislation would be to invade the constitutional rights of a portion of the American people: those rights were protected by the system which blessed all alike; they must be faithfully maintained; and to time, which cures all diseases, it must be left to eradicate the malady which impaired the common health.

But in the course of events two new parties appeared upon the scene—the Abolitionists on the one hand, the propagandists of human servitude on the other. He thought it his duty

to resist them both. He opposed the Abolitionists, as invaders of the rights of a portion of American citizens; he opposed the advocates of the extension of slavery, because their policy was calculated to postpone for a great while the date of its extinction. But he never became unduly excited about slavery. He had no sympathy for the religious or sentimental side of abolitionism, nor was he moved by the words of the philanthropists, preachers, or poets by whom the agitation was set ablaze and persistently fanned. He probably regarded it as an evil of less magnitude than several others that threatened the country. In the summary of the articles of his political belief* nine points are mentioned first, which have nothing to do with slavery, and only the last two concern it at all.

In his course in the Senate this attitude is distinctly marked in everything that he did or said. He voted for the annexation of Texas, where slavery already existed; he opposed the extension of slavery to the free territory acquired from Mexico. Yet he admitted that a peaceful dissolution of the Union, if the slave-holding South should seek it, was to be preferred to a civil war with a view to its abolition. He would have had no fighting about slavery, either for it or against it. The charge of being an abolitionist he always repudiated with earnestness.

The fusion of Democrats and Whigs during the Free-soil movement was regarded by him, before and after its development, as a great blunder. He believed that the safety of the country depended on the ascendency of the Democratic party, of which he had been an active member ever since he began to take an intelligent part in political affairs; and he thought it unwise to divide that party for what he deemed an inadequate cause. The thing to be thought of first was the preservation of the American Union, the American Constitution, and the American Nation; and for this he relied on the

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* *See* page 231.

Democratic party, whose principles he identified with the pure Republican theory. He deprecated swerving to the one side or to the other; he tried to keep the ship of the party steady on an even keel; when it deviated with a strong list to the side of the South he was perplexed and distressed; and, contrary to his judgment, and mainly under the influence of a personal pressure which he could not resist, he joined the Free-soil movement.

But as soon as it was possible to do so he retraced his steps and would have resumed the old position. He labored to reunite the party in which he still trusted, and from which he had never separated. He hoped, and perhaps fondly believed, that the slavery question might be regarded as settled, and renewed his efforts in the line of national progress under the compromises and guarantees of the Constitution.

Then came, nearer and nearer, the spectre of a dismemberment of the nation and a separation between North and South. To him this was the most terrible of prospects, excepting that of a fratricidal war. The dissolution of the American Union would have been, in his opinion, the greatest of all disasters, not only in its effect on our own people, but also as certain to extinguish the hopes of advocates of popular government throughout the whole world. He yielded to avert so horrible a calamity. He made concessions which at an earlier date he would not have made, in the hope of saving the nation: first in his thoughts were the country, the Union, the flag. Men *in extremis* must sacrifice something to save the rest. The only chance was in making common cause with those at the South who still adhered to the Union; their support could not be obtained at that critical hour without the plainest assurance that their constitutional rights should be perfectly safe, and that the privileges enjoyed under the Constitution by inhabitants of the free States should be enjoyed equally by them.

Then came the war. His course thenceforth was clear. They who in fog and mist are puzzled which way to move,

doubt no longer when the winds arise and blow away the clouds: they see once more the beacon-light, and nothing else. One dominant principle, love of the American Democratic Republican system, as practically realized under the Federal Constitution in the union of the States, had ruled him all his life; it ruled him then. He went into the war because, by the action of the South, the chance of a peaceful separation had been destroyed. The contest, though commenced by slave-holders, was not for the destruction of slavery, but for the defence and perpetuation of a system, under which the institution of slavery was amply protected, and might have continued to exist a thousand years more. Slavery was a dead issue for the moment; they who drew the sword did so for the assertion of principles deemed by them vastly more momentous than any question concerning the relations of negroes and white men. It is true that Emancipation followed, but only after years of blood and sorrow, and as an afterthought, of which the "War Democrats" never dreamed when they rose in defence of the country and for the honor of the nation.

To me, carefully studying the subject, this appears to be the simple story of his course. He lived, from the age of fifteen to that of eighty-one, in active service of his beloved country. To whom is it given, in this perplexing world, to be perfectly consistent throughout the immense and varied activities of sixty-six years? Yet he was, I think, consistent, if tested by the question, what he regarded, next to religion, as the highest duty and the proper aim of the citizen. Every act of his political life may be explained by one of these convictions:

(*a*) That the Constitution of the United States of America was an all but perfect work;

(*b*) That it was for the interests of the American people, and those of all advocates of popular government throughout the world, that our political experiment should prove successful;

(*c*) That the old Democratic party was the true exponent of the principles of the Constitution, and that the safety of the American people and the hope of mankind in general depended on the continued ascendency of those principles;

(*d*) That the preservation of the American Union under the American Constitution, at any sacrifice, must be the supreme object of those who enjoyed the blessings of its protection.

These convictions are consistent with each other, and they explain the acts of his public life.

Nothing could have shown more clearly the distracted state of the public mind, as the administration of Mr. Buchanan drew to an end, than the sight presented in the autumn elections in 1860. There were no less than four sets of candidates in the field: Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois and Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia, nominated by the regular Democratic Convention; John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky and Joseph Lane of Oregon, the candidates of the seceding Southern Democrats; John Bell of Tennessee and Edward Everett of Massachusetts representing another section of the people, who, rejecting the older organizations, aimed simply at the enforcement of the principles of the Constitution and the preservation of the Union without farther agitation of vexing questions; and Abraham Lincoln of Illinois and Hannibal Hamlin of Maine, the leaders of the Republican national organization. It had been found impossible to hold the Democratic party together any longer. Their national Convention assembled at Charleston, April 23. Irreconcilable antagonisms were soon apparent, and scenes of great violence occurred. At length most of the Southern delegates withdrew. The main body adjourned to meet at Baltimore, June 18. The seceding delegates, having adopted a platform satisfactory to themselves, called a Convention, to be held at Richmond, June 11. Separate nominations followed, and the fatal schism was complete. But a much worse thing was impending. It grew plainer every day that, in case their demands were not complied with, the Southern

States would seek to form a separate organization; but in what way no man as yet could tell. True, there were ominous signs in more than one quarter, yet it was probably the general opinion that the secession would be peaceful. Even that prospect was regarded with dismay by patriotic Americans. The end seemed not far off—the edifice, reared with infinite toil and pains, appeared to be tottering to its fall.

Great numbers of us were terribly perplexed in those days. Doubtless there was a glamour about the Southern cause which influenced men in spite of themselves, a certain sophistry of logic which gave to their demands a color of justice. It should be remembered also that many of us never thought it possible that a violent separation from the Union would be attempted; we conceded the right to a peaceful and orderly departure, if our Southern brethren should insist on having it so. It is a matter of little or no importance what were the feelings of the writer at that particular time, excepting as a specimen of those of a considerable number of persons, who loved at once the old Union and their kinsmen in the South. As for myself, I never dreamed of the coming war; I detested abolitionism; I deemed the course of the Republican party one of unjustifiable and mischievous aggression; my sympathies were with the South, and I had no doubt of their right, if they chose, to free themselves gently from those bonds which held us together. Under these impressions I voted for Breckenridge and Lane, leaving my bed while suffering from severe illness, and taking the risk involved by standing in the cold air on an inclement day, waiting my turn to vote, because I felt it a sacred duty to do whatever my one ballot could accomplish to prevent the election of Mr. Lincoln. Looking back to those days is like looking into a land of dreams. What broke the dream at once, and set me and others in my position face to face with facts never before understood, was the opening roar of the guns directed against Fort Sumter. With that portentous sound the old illusions passed forever and a new cycle came in.

As the fatal time drew nearer the anxiety of men in high position became intense. I recall occasions when my father spoke to me on the questions of the day, disclosing the grave trouble that possessed his thoughts. On one such occasion he referred to the possibility that New York might become a free-city, entirely independent, in case of a general break-up; not that he advocated the idea, but he placed it in the category of possibilities.* It was his opinion that a separation, if sought by the South through peaceful means alone, must be conceded by the North, as an evil less than that of war. A memorandum, written in the year 1875, gives his views on the subject of the attempted secession:

"NOTES BY JOHN A. DIX CONCERNING CERTAIN EVENTS AND TRANSACTIONS IN WHICH HE TOOK PART, DURING THE CIVIL WAR OF 1861–'65, IN THE UNITED STATES.

"Ten years have elapsed since the attempt of the Southern States to withdraw from the Union and to overthrow the Federal Government by force was frustrated. The Great Rebellion, as it will probably be termed in after-times when the history of that epoch shall be impartially written, cost the combatants a desperate struggle of four years for the ascendency, the loss of half a million of lives, a debt on the part of the general government of twenty-six hundred million dollars, a heavy indebtedness in most of the non-slave-holding States, wide-spread ruin throughout the South, the emancipation of four millions of slaves, and an inability on the part of the Confederated States to redeem the pecuniary obligations they had contracted in the prosecution of their enterprise. When the prejudices and passions enlisted in this fratricidal conflict shall have passed away and another generation shall have come to manhood, it will be difficult to find an adequate cause for this insurrection against the common government. The pretexts

* The plan was advocated by Fernando Wood, in the annual message addressed by him to the Common Council of New York, January 7, 1861.

on the part of its authors were that the non-slave-holding States did not execute in good faith the requirement of the Constitution of the United States to deliver up persons escaping from labor or service—a provision acknowledged to have been intended to include fugitive slaves—and that the election of Mr. Lincoln by the votes of the non-slave-holding States alone, against the unanimous vote of the slave-holding States, was dangerous to the prosperity of the latter, and to their equal participation in the benefits which the Federal Government was instituted to secure. There was no just ground for the former pretext. Congress had passed all necessary laws for the purpose of compelling the surrender of fugitive slaves, and the Supreme Court of the United States had decided that there was no obligation on the part of individual States to legislate in furtherance of that object. In some of the Northern and Western States individuals, who believed the tenure of slaves to be a crime, had associated to shelter fugitives and to facilitate their escape to Canada, where they could not be reclaimed by their owners. These associations, though unquestionably in violation of good faith, were the acts of individuals, and involved no responsibility on the part of the Federal Government. The escape from slavery was almost exclusively confined to two or three slave-holding States bordering on the States in which slavery was prohibited.

"The election of Mr. Lincoln was in strict conformity to the Constitution; and a decided majority of the Senate of the United States was opposed to the policy of his party, and in favor of maintaining in good faith all the obligations of the government. There was, therefore, no possibility that the rights of the Southern States could be impaired by unfriendly legislation.

"The real cause of the secession movement was, beyond dispute, a belief on the part of the slave-holding States that their slave property was imperilled by their association with the Northern States; that their prosperity would be promoted by the establishment of an independent government;

that the intellectual and social condition of the two sections of the country, arising out of the tenure of slaves in one, and a prevalent conviction in the other that it was a violation of the laws of God, was incompatible with an impartial administration of the government, and that the association was a perpetual menace to the existence of slavery. To this cause may be superadded the influence of the suggestion that the new offices, which a separate political organization would require at home and abroad, would furnish more ample means of gratifying the ambition of their aspiring statesmen.

"It is by no means improbable that if a separation had been sought by the slave-holding States persistently, and through peaceful means alone, it might have been ultimately conceded by the Northern States in preference to a bloody civil war, with all its miseries and demoralization. But the forcible seizure of arsenals, mints, revenue-cutters, and other property of the common government, and the attack and capture of Fort Sumter, put an end to argument as well as to the spirit of conciliation, and aroused a feeling of exasperation which nothing but the arbitrament of arms could overcome. Acquiescence under such circumstances of aggression would have been ascribed to pusillanimity: and it should not have been expected from any portion of a community which, in the establishment and maintenance of its independence, and in the vindication of its honor and its rights during a period of nearly a hundred years, had never hesitated to put life, property, and all it held dear in peril.

"The result of this great conflict—one of the most notable in the history of human society—has been accepted as conclusive by both parties; and although time alone can wholly remove the animosities to which it gave birth, it may be safely said that no civil war of such vast dimensions was ever conducted by the combatants with so little cruelty and vindictiveness. It is, no doubt, due in some degree to this absence of the worst characteristics of intestine strife that the two sections of the country are coming together in the ancient

spirit of fraternal concord, to consult and labor for their common prosperity and fame."

The election of Mr. Lincoln, November 6, 1860, was the beginning of the end. The Southern leaders had agreed to regard that event as a signal that the Union could be maintained no longer. Nothing could have prevented it except a consolidation of the Democratic forces, North and South, which was impossible. Action soon followed: on the 20th of December the State of South Carolina adopted an ordinance of secession. On the 4th of February, 1861, precisely one month before the time fixed by the Constitution of the United States for the inauguration of President Lincoln, a convention held at Montgomery, in Alabama, announced to the world the existence of the "CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA."

There is something almost pathetic in the history of the efforts which were made, during the progress of those startling and sinister events, to avert, if possible, the coming shock. The state of public feeling became more intense from day to day; and, as the outline of the terrible future was more plainly revealed, recourse was had to every action by which it was thought possible to propitiate a threatening Deity or to conciliate angry men. Friday, the 4th of January, was designated, by proclamation from Washington, for observance as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer that it might please Almighty God to avert the horrors which seemed to be closing darkly around the path of the nation. Bishops issued their pastoral letters to the clergy and laity of their flocks, and set forth special offices for the occasion; church doors stood open all day long; fathers gathered their households together about the home altar—one great petition for help went up to Heaven. Meanwhile, citizens of repute and influence were engaged in strenuous efforts to bring estranged brethren to a better mind, to calm wild passion, and to exorcise the spectre of Civil War. Among the notable movements of the hour may be mentioned the introduction of the "Compromise Resolutions"

in the United States Senate, December 18, 1860, by John J. Crittenden of Kentucky, and the session of the "Peace Congress" at Washington.

Proceedings in the same general line took place in New York; and here I may say a few words about what was known at the time as "the Pine Street Meeting," in which a large number of our most respected and influential citizens took part. My friend Colonel Richard Lathers has furnished me with some interesting details of its proceedings, which I give in his own words:

"The period referred to in your note is quite fresh in my memory, and I have always recalled the incidents connected with the 'Pine Street Meeting' as worthy of more prominence than the patriotic purposes of the actors have received. I will give you a short history of the affair from the beginning.

"General Dix, in 1861, was the Postmaster of this city, and, in accordance with the whole tenor of his life, was an active participator in everything which should interest a citizen or promote the welfare of the whole country, his influence being felt and valued in all sections of the Union, in and out of his own party, and far beyond the confines of his own section. When the Union was first menaced by secession he was the counsellor and ready adviser of all patriotic men; for while he was an advocate of Southern rights under the limits of the Constitution, yet he was a firm and uncompromising Union man, and, as such, bent his energies to convince our erring Southern brethren that secession must fail; that it could not be justified in any event; and that even those who then sympathized with them would promptly confront them if resistance to the authority of the government should be attempted. While in communication with prominent men of the South, by personal interviews or by correspondence, he addressed a letter to the Hon. Howell Cobb, then Secretary of the Treasury, but showing signs of secessionist proclivities. It contained an exhaustive and most convincing argument on the question of the day. This letter he sent to me to read be-

fore mailing it.* I immediately ran up to the Post-office and requested a copy, to send to a few prominent men in South Carolina, under cover of a letter of my own, which I had prepared and submitted to Mr. Evarts and other distinguished Republicans, and in which I had expressed the view that the probable measures of the Republican party would develop a policy favorable to Southern interests. In my letter I requested a formal answer from my correspondents in the South, and promised them that a meeting should be called to consider the whole situation from a friendly stand-point, irrespective of party lines.

"The meeting was called by a private circular addressed to leading men throughout the State of New York; among the signers were your father, William B. Astor, John J. Cisco, Wilson G. Hunt, and James W. Beekman. The responses were so hearty and general that I found there might be some two thousand persons present; and I was compelled, instead of receiving them at my office, to hire a couple of buildings in Pine Street, in order to afford accommodation for so large a body. Charles O'Conor was called to the chair. I opened the meeting with a short speech, by request of General Dix; and speeches were made by ex-Senator Dickinson, John McKeon, Mr. A. A. Low, and other distinguished men of both parties, and representing different sections of the State. An address prepared by General Dix was passed unanimously, without debate; resolutions appended to it were amended, and then adopted unanimously. Ex-President Fillmore—who, though unable to be present, heartily endorsed the objects of the meeting—was appointed chairman of a committee to visit the South as bearers of the address, and of this committee I had the honor to be made a member. Another committee was then appointed to take measures for a public demonstration by the citizens of New York, and this led to the great meeting which was held at Castle Garden a short time afterward.

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* See Appendix, No. V.

James F. Cox
Wm. B. Clarke
O. G. Carter
Secretaries.

Wm. A. Love
Chm.

John A. Dix
Ex. Off. Comptroller

Royal Phelps

D. Willard Bunk

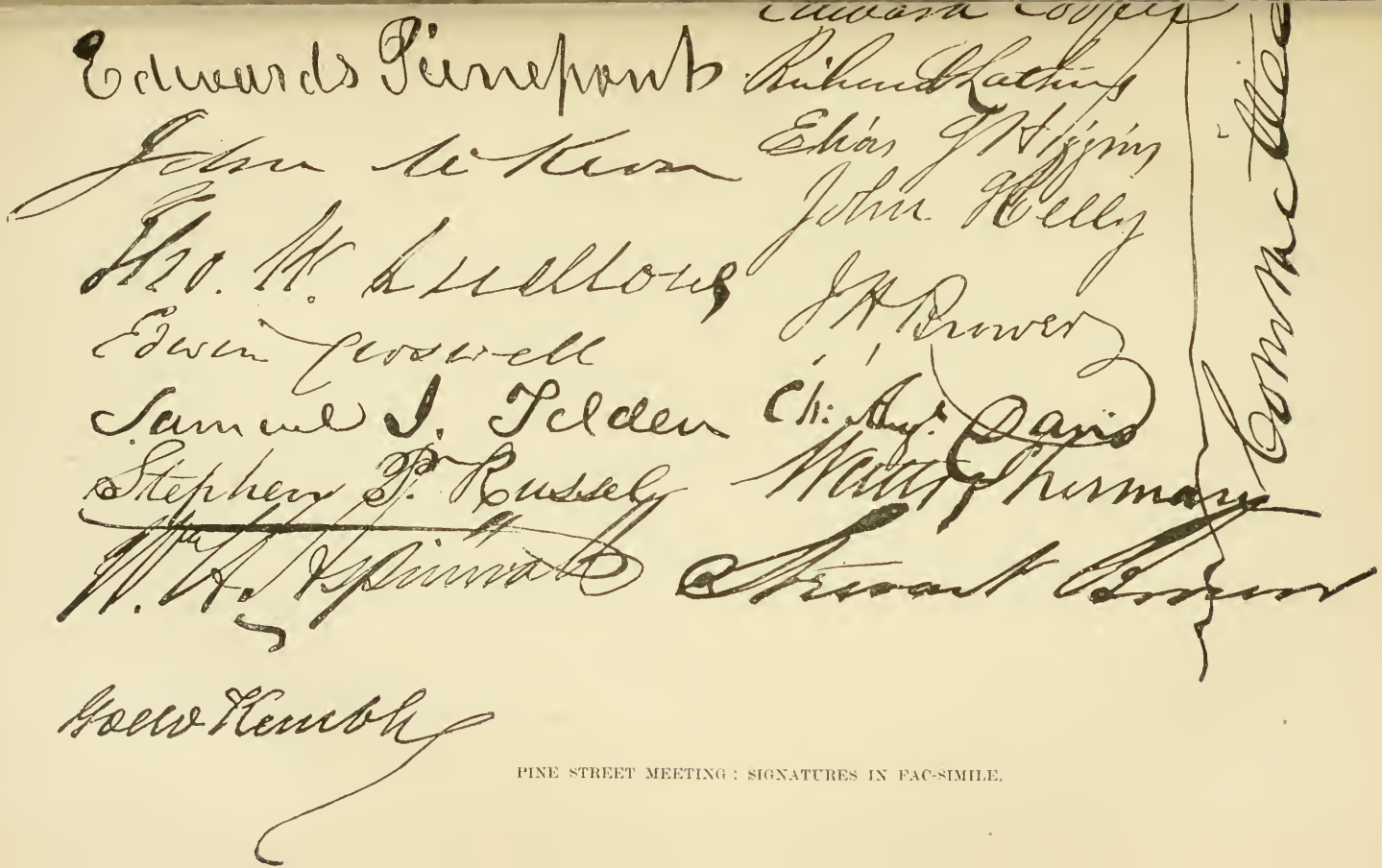
John M. Barbour

James W. Beekman

J. L. O'Sullivan

Gerard Hallock

George E. Baldwin



PINE STREET MEETING : SIGNATURES IN FAC-SIMILE.

"At the Pine Street meeting the letters which I referred to were read, together with replies which had by that time been received. I regret to say that they were not as conciliatory as had been expected.

"Mr. Fillmore was unable to go South; but I carried the address and resolutions, and read them to Jefferson Davis and the Governors of South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. The general response was an expression of regret that the action had not taken place earlier, before all parties were so far committed to secession. While I was at Mobile, making a Union speech before the Chamber of Commerce by the request of members of that body, irrespective of party (General Walker, brother of the Secretary of War of the Confederate Government then just organized, presiding), the meeting came to a speedy end, before I had concluded my remarks, in consequence of the reception of news by telegraph that the attack on Fort Sumter had commenced.

"By invitation of the Union merchants of New Orleans I went there to address the Chamber of Commerce of that city; but the newspapers assailed me, and the Mayor, calling on me at my hotel, requested me to return home at once, and said that a Union speech at such a time of excitement might produce a riot, and certainly could have no effect in the interest of my mission. I took his advice; and on my return to New York I found great excitement here, even against myself, the papers having stated that I had gone to the South to give aid and comfort to the rebellion! Such is life!"

Among my father's papers I have been so fortunate as to find the original of the address referred to, with the autographs of the signers. These I now present to the reader, and with a personal statement which will explain one motive among others for preserving them as they stand. It will be observed that my father's signature is at one side, with that of Mr. James T. Soutter, and that these two names are somewhat apart from the rest. Mr. Soutter was at that time President of the Bank of the Republic, a man of unsullied repu-

tation, great abilities, and a noble spirit; remembered now with respect and love by all who knew him. He was one of those Southerners who, loyal to the Union and strongly opposed to secession, regarded civil war with absolute horror. The South had many such patriotic citizens within her borders, but unhappily their voices were drowned by the cries of excited revolutionists, and they were ultimately swept away by a torrent which it was impossible for them to resist. In after-years, when this good and kind-hearted gentleman, having patiently sustained a long and sad trial of unmerited suspicion, unjust persecution, and exile from his native land, had found release from his earthly sorrows in a Christian's death, and when many of the distressing events of those days had faded into dim memories, there came into my own life the greatest brightness and the fullest happiness I ever knew, through my marriage with a daughter of his house, a woman who does honor to the name she bore, and fills the perfect measure of wife, mother, and friend. I never had the good fortune to know her father; but, in looking on her, I can imagine what he must have been. One fact more I venture to add in this connection. When Mr. Soutter returned home, after years of involuntary absence, upon the conclusion of the war, it was necessary for him to seek his pardon and amnesty from the Government of the United States — a pardon for crimes never committed! — and the first signature to the petition addressed to President Johnson in his behalf was that of John A. Dix.

The address adopted at the Pine Street meeting appears to merit preservation, as throwing light upon the history of the efforts to avert the dissolution of the Union:

"Fellow-Citizens and Brethren of the South,—It has become our painful duty to address ourselves to you under the most alarming circumstances in which we have been placed since the formation of the government. In the fulness of our prosperity, our strength, and our credit the Union

to which we owe it all is in imminent danger of becoming a prey to internal dissension, sacrificing the great interests of the country, and forfeiting the high position it holds among the nations of the earth. To avert a calamity so disgraceful to us as a free people, so disastrous to the common welfare, and so disheartening to the friends of representative government in both hemispheres, we appeal to you by the sacred memory of that fraternal friendship which bound our forefathers together through the perils of the Revolution, which has united us all through succeeding years of alternate good and ill, and which has conducted us, under the protection of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe, to wealth and power—by a progress unexampled in the history of the past—by all the endearing recollections with which this association is hallowed, we conjure you to pause before the current of disunion shall acquire a force which may prove irresistible, that we may consult together, with the calmness due to the magnitude of the crisis, for the removal of the causes which have produced it. We make this appeal to you in entire confidence that it will not be repulsed. We have stood by you in the political contest through which we have just passed. We have asserted your rights as earnestly as though they had been our own. You cannot refuse, therefore, to listen to us, and to weigh with becoming deliberation the reasons we have for believing that the wrongs which have led to the existing alienation between the two great sections of the country may, with your co-operation, be speedily redressed. We do not intend to go back to the origin of these wrongs. We will not review the dark history of the aggression and insult visited upon you by abolitionists and their abettors during the last thirty-five years. Our detestation of these acts of hostility is not inferior to your own. We take things as they exist, to deal with them as an evil not to be eradicated by violence, but to be remedied by a treatment which shall at the same time be considerate and firm. We call on you as friends to delay action until we can induce those through whose agency

the evil has been brought upon us to listen to the voices of reason and duty, and to place your relations and ours to the common privileges and benefits of the Union on a footing of perfect equality; or, failing in this, until we can bring the majority of our fellow-citizens in the North to co-operate with us, as we do not doubt they will, in the proper measures of redress. We do not despair of securing from those to whose hands the reins of government are about to be intrusted a recognition of your rights in regard to the surrender of fugitive slaves and equality in the Territories. We know that great changes of opinion have already taken place among their most intelligent and influential men—that a reaction has commenced, which is not likely to be stayed—that errors and prejudices which in the heat of the canvass were inaccessible to reason and persuasion have been on cool reflection renounced; nay, more, that many, whose opinions have undergone no change, are willing, in a praiseworthy spirit of patriotism, to make on questions which are not fundamental in our system of government, but merely accessary to our social condition, the concessions necessary to preserve the Union in its integrity, and to save us from the fatal alternative of dismemberment into two or more empires, jealous of each other, and embittered by the remembrance of differences which we had not the justice or the magnanimity to compose.

"Let us enumerate briefly the grounds on which we repose our trust in a speedy accommodation of the existing disagreement between the North and the South:

"I. The late Election.—Although it was adverse to us throughout the North, we have in the detail added materially to our strength in Congress, where the power to redress wrong and prevent abuse is most needed. In this State, against five Democratic and Union members of the present Congress, eleven members have been elected for the next, and in the other Northern States five members more have been gained, making a change of twenty-two votes in the House of Representatives, giving a decided majority in that body to the

friends of the Union and the equal rights of the South, rendering all hostile legislation impossible, and affording assurance that existing wrong will be redressed.

"In regard to the general result of the election we do not hesitate to say that the conservative men have been defeated by their own divisions rather than by the votes of their opponents, and that it is not a true criterion of the relative strength of parties. The slavery question was but an element in the contest; it would have proved utterly inadequate to the result had not the Democratic party been disorganized by its own dissensions. Even in the city of New York, with an overwhelming majority, one of the most conservative Congress districts was lost by running two candidates against a single Republican.

"In the Congress districts carried by the anti-Republicans the canvass was placed distinctly on the ground of sustaining the equal rights of the States in the Territories. In the month of May last an address was published in the city of New York reviewing the controversy between the two great sections of the country in regard to the Territorial question, and assuming as a basis of settlement the following grounds:

"1. A citizen of any State in the Union may emigrate to the Territories with his property, whether it consists of slaves or any other subject of personal ownership.

"2. So long as the Territorial condition exists the relation of master and slave is not to be disturbed by Federal or local legislation.

"3. Whenever a Territory shall be entitled to admission into the Union as a State the inhabitants may, in framing their Constitution, decide for themselves whether it shall authorize or exclude slavery.

"We stand on these grounds now. We believe the controversy can be adjusted on no other. Many who sustained in the late canvass a candidate who did not assent to them disagreed with him in opinion. We speak particularly of the city of New York; and we say with confidence that we be-

lieve the great conservative party of the North may be rallied successfully on the foregoing propositions as a basis of adjustment. In carrying them out we shall re-establish the practice of the government from its organization to the year 1820, running through the successive administrations of Washington, the elder Adams, Jefferson, and Madison. The Territory north-west of the Ohio River, in which slavery was prohibited by an ordinance adopted under the Articles of Confederation, was an exceptional case. In the other Territories emigrants from the States were freely admitted with slaves when composing a part of their families. The adoption of the Missouri Compromise, under the administration of Mr. Monroe, was the first departure from the practice of the government under the Constitution. We must go back to the policy of the founders of the Republic if we hope to preserve the Union. We believe this great object can be accomplished, and that harmony may be restored to the country, if time for action be given to those who have its destinies in their hands.

"II. The Republican party.—It cannot possibly remain unbroken during the term of the incoming administration. The two chief elements—the political and religious—can never harmonize in practice. The process of separation has already commenced. While those who ostensibly represent the religious element are as fierce as ever in their denunciations, leading politicians, no doubt, in view of the responsibility to devolve on the President-elect in carrying on the government, have renounced ultra opinions, and proclaim the duty of enforcing an efficient fugitive slave law. In Boston the Union party triumphed by a majority of several thousand votes in the late municipal election, and the abolitionists have been expelled by the people from the public halls in which they attempted to hold their disorganizing assemblies. In other cities of New England the same reaction has taken place. The theorists and the politicians can never hold together when measures of government are to be agreed on; and it is not believed that the Republican party can sustain itself

for a single year on the basis of the principles on which it was organized.

"It is a mistake to imagine that the whole Republican party, or even the great bulk of it, is really at heart animated by any spirit hostile to the rights or menacing to the interests of the South. Antislaveryism has constituted but one of various political elements combined in that 'Republicanism' which has elected Mr. Lincoln. We pledge ourselves to you that, whenever a fair opportunity shall be presented of a distinct and simple vote of the North upon the full recognition of all your Constitutional rights, a very large majority in nearly every Northern State will be found true to the Constitution, and true to the fraternal relations established by it between you and us.

"III. The Fugitive Slave Law.—Eight or nine States have passed laws calculated, if not designed, to embarrass the surrender of fugitive slaves. Wrong as these enactments are in principle and in purpose, they have been practically nugatory. We believe no fugitive from service or labor has been discharged under any one of them. They are, nevertheless, utterly indefensible as the index of unfriendly feeling; they have wrought in practice the farther injury of furnishing an example of infidelity to Constitutional obligations—an injury to us as well as to you; and no one doubts that they will, when brought before the judicial tribunals of the country, be pronounced violations or evasions of a duty enjoined by the Constitution, and therefore void.

"A movement has already been made in Vermont—the most hopeless of the Republican States—to repeal her personal liberty bill, and the question, as we understand, is yet undecided in the hands of a committee. Massachusetts, it is believed, will repeal hers at the approaching session of her Legislature; nor is it doubted that Mr. Lincoln, who has publicly declared that the Fugitive Slave Law must be faithfully executed, will exert his influence to procure the abrogation of all conflicting enactments by the States. That it is the duty

of the States to repeal them, without waiting for the courts to pronounce them invalid, no man who justly appreciates the existing danger will deny.

"IV. The Conservative Men of the North.—Since the adoption of the compromise measures of 1850 we have firmly maintained your rights under them. Previous differences of opinion were cheerfully renounced. The contest with the ultraism of the Republican party, active and strong as it is, has not been unaccompanied by personal sacrifices on our part. They have been encountered unhesitatingly, and without regard to political consequences to ourselves. We felt that we had a stake in the issue not less important than you. Believing the Union essential to the prosperity and the honor of the country; holding that its dissolution would not only overwhelm us with calamity and disgrace, but that it would give a fatal shock to the cause of free government throughout the world, we have sought by all practicable means to maintain it by carrying out with scrupulous fidelity the compromises of the Constitution. Though beaten at the late election, it is our sincere belief that we are stronger on this question now than we have been at any previous time. We believe we are nearer a solution satisfactory to you than we ever have been. We regard it as certain to be accomplished, unless it is defeated by precipitate action on your part.

"These are a few of the grounds on which we rely for an adjustment of existing differences. There are others which we deem it needless at this juncture to press on you. But we should leave the view we take of the question unfinished if we were not to add, that any violation of your Constitutional rights by the incoming administration, if it were attempted, would meet with as prompt and determined a resistance here as it would from yourselves. We desire it to be distinctly understood that we speak with full knowledge of the import of our words, and that we pledge ourselves to such a resistance by all the means which may be necessary to make it effective. But we are satisfied no such danger is to be feared.

It cannot, in the nature of things, be an ultra administration. No party in power, under our system of government, can fail to be conservative, no matter on what declarations the canvass may have been conducted by its leading supporters. There is an undercurrent of moderation in the flow of popular opinion, which will inevitably withhold those, to whom the great interests of the country are only temporarily confided, from running rashly into extremes.

"Let us, then, fellow-citizens and brethren, again appeal to you to abstain from any movement which shall have for its object a dissolution of the political bonds which have so long, and so happily for us all, united us to each other. They have given us honor, wealth, and power. If occasional differences have disturbed the general harmony, they have been speedily adjusted, with fresh accessions of benefit to the common welfare. No nation has had so uninterrupted a career of prosperity. To what are we to attribute it but to the well-adjusted organization of our political system to its several parts? We do not call on you to aid us in upholding it on these considerations alone. There are others of a more personal nature —not addressing themselves to you as communities of men merely, but as individuals like ourselves, bound to us by ties of reciprocal obligation, which we call on you in all candor to respect. We should not make this appeal to you on an occasion of less magnitude. But when the very foundations of society are in danger of being broken up, involving the peace of families, the interests of communities, and the lasting welfare and reputation of the whole Confederacy of States, no feeling of delicacy should dissuade us from speaking freely and without concealment. We call on you, then, as brethren and friends, to stand by us as we have stood by you.

"During the angry contentions of the last nine years we have been the open and unshrinking vindicators of your rights. It is in fighting with you the battle for the Constitution that we have by an unfortunate combination of causes been overthrown—not finally and hopelessly (far from it),

but temporarily only, and with a remaining strength which needs only to be eoneentrated to give us the victory in future confliets. Is it magnanimous—nay, is it just—to abandon us when we are as eager as ever to renew the contest, on grounds essentially your own, and leave us to earry it on in utter hopelessness for want of your co-operation and aid? We eannot doubt the response you will give to this appeal. You cannot fail to see that, by hastily separating yourselves from us, you will deprive us of the co-operation needed to contend sueeessfully against the ultraism which surrounds us, and may leave us without power in a political organization imbued, by the very act of separation, with a rancorous spirit of hostility to you. We conjure you, then, to unite with us to prevent the question of disunion from being precipitated by rash counsels, and in a manner altogether unworthy of our rank among the great nations of the earth, and of the destinies whieh await us, if we are only true to ourselves.

"If the event shall prove that we have overstated our own ability to procure a redress of existing wrongs, all the disposition of others to eoneede what is due to you, as members of a Confederaey whieh can only be preserved by equal justice to all, let us, when all the efforts of patriotism shall have proved unavailing, when the painful truth shall have forced itself on the conviction that our common brotherhood ean be no longer maintained in the mutual eonfidence in whieh its whole value consists—in a word, when reconciliation shall beeome hopeless, and it shall be manifest (whieh may God forbid!) that our future paths must lie wide apart—let us do all that becomes reasonable men to break the force of so great a ealamity by parting in peaee. Let us remember that we have public obligations, at home and abroad, which for our good name must not be dishonored; that we have great interests within and without—on the ocean, in our cities and towns, in our widely extended internal improvements, in our fields and at our firesides—whieh must not be inconsiderately and wantonly sacrificed. If, undervaluing the great boon of our prosper-

ity, we can no longer consent to enjoy it in common, let us divide what we possess on the one hand, and what we owe on the other, and save the Republic—the noblest the world has seen—from the horrors of civil war and the degradation of financial discredit.

"If, on the other hand (which may God grant!), you shall not turn a deaf ear to this appeal; if it shall be seen in the sequel that we have correctly appreciated the influences which are at work to bring about a reconciliation of existing differences and a redress of existing wrongs; if mutual confidence shall be restored, and the current of our prosperity shall resume its course, to flow on, as it must, with no future dissensions to disturb it, and in perpetually increasing volume and force, it will be the most cheering consolation of our lives that, in contributing to so happy an issue out of the prevailing gloom, we have neither misjudged your patriotism nor the willingness of our common countrymen to do you justice.

"*The Resolutions.*

"*Whereas*, the Constitution of the United States was designed to secure equal rights and privileges to the people of all the States, which were either parties to its formation or which have subsequently thereto become members of the Union; and, whereas, the said instrument contained certain stipulations in regard to the surrender of fugitive slaves, under the designation of 'persons held to labor or service in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another,' which stipulations were designed to be complied with by the Act of Congress making provision for such surrender; and, whereas, the agitated state of the country arising out of differences of opinion in regard to these provisions demands that we should declare explicitly our sense of the obligations arising under them; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the delivery of fugitive slaves to their masters is an obligation enjoined by the Constitution, in which all good citizens are bound to acquiesce; and that all laws passed by the States with a view to embarrass and obstruct the execution of the Act of Congress making provision therefor, are an infraction of that instrument, and should be promptly repealed.

"*Resolved*, That the Territories of the United States are the common property of the people thereof; that they are of right, and ought to be,

open to the free immigration of citizens of all the States, with their families, and with whatever is the subject of personal ownership under the laws of the States from which they emigrated; that the relation of master and slave cannot, during the Territorial condition, be rightfully disturbed by Federal or local legislation; and that the people of any such Territory can only dispose of the question of slavery, in connection with their own political organization, when they form a Constitution with a view to their admission into the Union as a State.

"*Resolved*, That we pledge ourselves to uphold these principles by all the means in our power; to seek by all practicable efforts a redress of the wrongs of which the Southern States justly complain, and to maintain their equality under the Constitution, in the full enjoyment of all the rights and privileges it confers.

"*Resolved*, That, while we deplore the existing excitement in the Southern States, we do not hesitate to say that there is just ground for it. But we earnestly entreat our Southern brethren to abstain from hasty and inconsiderate action, that time may be afforded for bringing about a reconciliation of existing differences, and that the union of the States—the source of our prosperity and power—may be preserved and perpetuated by a restoration of public harmony and mutual confidence.

"*Resolved*, That Hon. Millard Fillmore, Hon. Greene C. Bronson, and Richard Lathers, Esq., be appointed a committee to proceed to the South, with a view to make such explanation to our Southern brethren, in regard to the subjects embraced in the address and resolutions, as they may deem necessary, and to give such farther assurances as may be needed to manifest our determination to maintain their rights.

"*Resolved*, That in case either of the gentlemen named in the foregoing resolution be unable to perform the service for which he is appointed, the Committee on the address and resolutions be authorized to fill the vacancy.

"CHARLES O'CONOR, Chairman.

"JAMES F. COX; WM. B. CLERKE; O. G. CARTER, Secretaries.

"JOHN A. DIX,
JAMES T. SOUTTER,
WILSON G. HUNT,
JAMES W. BEEKMAN,
GERARD HALLOCK,
A. S. JARVIS,
E. PIERREPONT,
JOHN MCKEON,
THOMAS W. LUDLOW,
EDWIN CROSWELL,
SAMUEL J. TILDEN,
STEPHEN P. RUSSEL,
WM. H. ASPINWALL,
G. KEMBLE,
ROYAL PHELPS,
T. W. CLERKE,
JOHN M. BARBOUR,
J. L. O'SULLIVAN,
GEO. E. BALDWIN,
GUSTAVUS W. SMITH,
EDWARD COOPER,
RICHARD LATHERS,
ELIAS J. HIGGINS,
JOHN KELLY,
J. H. BROWER,
CHARLES A. DAVIS,
WATTS SHERMAN,
STEWART BROWN."

The alarm created by the proceedings at the South was intensified by the conduct of the administration. Members of Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet were in open league with the party of secession, and actually using their official influence to promote the cause. It is not to be doubted that the President was personally loyal to the nation and to his oath of office; but he was surrounded by men engaged in the conspiracy to overthrow the government, and had not the force to rid himself of their presence until they had wrought almost irreparable mischief. But the time had come at which to apply an outside pressure on the part of the advocates of law and order. The President received distinct intimations, from the Democratic representatives of New York in Congress that, unless he could maintain the supremacy and dignity of the government and protect the public property, he must no longer rely on their support; and it was said that, in Cabinet Council, he had expressed himself very strongly as to the course pursued in the disaffected quarters of the country; that he had charged the South Carolina representatives with misunderstanding his motives and abusing his forbearance, declared that his conduct had been influenced by representations of strong Union men in the South who were opposing secession, and protested against the action of South Carolina in forcing useless and dangerous issues on the country, and pursuing a line which must end in making the question a military instead of a political one, and settling it by force of arms.

General Dix was in constant correspondence with the government, as a maintainer of its dignity and honor and an opponent of schemes of nullification. He had the confidence of the community; it was exhibited in a manner not to be misunderstood. The government was in imminent peril, from the seizure of its forts, arsenals, custom-houses, and navy-yards throughout the South; of the forts, at the close of Mr. Buchanan's administration, there remained, within the seven States which had seceded, only Fort Sumter, at Charleston,

and Fort Pickens, at Pensacola. Attempts at conciliation were met with scorn and contumely. But there was a much greater evil than any of these. The government could get no money; the want of money would be ruin. Howell Cobb, Secretary of the Treasury, resigned on the 10th of December, leaving the Treasury empty, and joined the secession movement, becoming President of the Montgomery Conference. On his abandonment of his post Philip F. Thomas, of Maryland, was appointed in his place. The choice was an unfortunate one. The Secretary was coldly received in Wall Street; his efforts to obtain aid for the government were met by a frigid silence. At length the President was given to understand distinctly that not one dollar would be forthcoming from the banks and financial institutions of the metropolis until he should have placed in his Cabinet men on whom the friends of the government and the Union could depend. The argument is one to which administrations are compelled to yield. The President asked what would satisfy them; and at a meeting of our leading men, held at the Bank of Commerce, it was decided to require of him, as a condition to their support, the appointment of General Dix to a Cabinet position. The understanding among the gentlemen present was that the position should be that of Secretary of the Treasury, although they did not deem it courteous to express it openly. No higher proof could have been given of the moral power of a good name.

On the evening of Tuesday, January 8, my father received a despatch from the President asking him to come at once to the White House. He went immediately, and was offered the War Department. This he declined, informing Mr. Buchanan, as had been agreed upon, that at that moment he could be of no service to him in any position except that of the Treasury Department, and that he would accept no other post. The President asked for time. The following day he had Mr. Thomas's resignation in his hands, and sent General Dix's name to the Senate: it was instantly confirmed. The

news of the appointment was received in New York and elsewhere with profound satisfaction: the financial dead-lock was at once broken; the government found itself in possession of all the money that it wanted; and the country saw a strong Cabinet and a Union Administration. Mr. Holt was in the War Department, Judge Black was Secretary of State, Mr. Toucey Secretary of the Navy, and Mr. Stanton Attorney-general. The reins were at last in the hands of men ready to defend the Constitution and oppose secession.

General Dix returned from Washington, on the 11th, to make hurried arrangements for the ensuing six weeks. On the following day a meeting of bank officers and directors of moneyed institutions was held at the Bank of Commerce, at which the following resolution, moved by Mr. Charles H. Russell, and seconded by Mr. Moses Taylor, was adopted:

"*Resolved*, That this meeting learns with great satisfaction the appointment just announced of the Hon. John A. Dix, as Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, believing, from the well-known ability, integrity, and honorable character of this gentleman, his devotion to the Union, and his determination to maintain the laws, that the change thus effected will inspire throughout this community increased confidence in the administration of that department and the stability of the government."

Upon motion of Mr. James Gallatin, seconded by Mr. James Punnett, it was farther

"*Resolved*, That we will meet at this place on Friday next, at one o'clock; and in the mean time will confer with the Boards of our respective institutions, and then determine the rate of interest at which we will bid for the proposed issue of United States Treasury notes."

These resolutions tell the story in brief. As was justly observed: "All parties have concurred in rejoicing at the appointment of Mr. Dix, but we have seen no tribute to his worth more striking than this. A man has lived to some purpose whose appointment instantly raises the credit of his

country, from a simple conviction of his honor and patriotism."

Before his departure for Washington, General Dix went to the Post-office and took formal leave of his corps. The men were hastily called together. He addressed them, complimenting them on their fidelity, zeal, and ability. Alluding to the circumstances under which he had been called to the office of Postmaster, he exonerated the men, one and all, from blame, and declared his conviction of the integrity of those by whom he was then surrounded. Referring to the troubled condition of the country, he expressed the belief that, with God's help, the peril would pass away, that the bonds which had held the States together would be reunited, and that when he and those around him should meet again it would be to welcome the arrival of days of tranquillity and peace. And, so saying, he bade them farewell.

General Dix was the guest of the President, and in residence at the White House, from the date of his appointment, January 11, 1861, until the end of that administration. Mr. Buchanan was still hopeful of a solution of our difficulties; but the members of his Cabinet could not have shared his views. The six weeks to which I now refer were among the most exciting of my father's life. He found the Treasury Department in a state of the utmost confusion. Public business had been neglected; letters from merchants and capitalists remained unanswered; complaints from all parts of the country had been unheeded; irregularity in the transaction of affairs appeared to be the rule and common practice; dishonesty and knavery were apparent through their results; underneath all was a spirit of disloyalty to the government. In a private letter from Washington the following expressions occur:

"Things look dark here to-day (January 16). The utter inactivity of Congress stupefies those who otherwise would have some hopes. The House of Representatives is an assemblage governed by the cant and hypocrisy of the worst Puri-

tan elements. National men are discouraged. Southern leaders reiterate that outside of South Carolina, even in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida, the Union sentiment prevails in the hearts of the people; but that it cannot be got at. It is buried in a present triumph of feverish, demagogic secessionism. All eyes have been turned toward Washington; but here nothing is done. Mr. Buchanan has but a few weeks more to remain in office, and can neither act upon hopes or fears, as he would be enabled to do if his term were but half expired. He is next to powerless, though his intentions are good, and he is surrounded by comparatively able men. Stanton and Dix alone might have aided the country greatly if they had been in office earlier; and then there is General Scott, who is indefatigable. But I fear it is all in vain."

The difficulties with which the Secretary had to contend, inside and outside the department, were prodigious. Major Anderson was shut up in Fort Sumter, and commissioners from the Governor of South Carolina were in Washington, to treat for the surrender of that fortress to the State. General Dix and Major Anderson were old friends; they had belonged to the same regiment in the regular service; it may be imagined with what suspense and anxiety the former watched the fortunes of his comrade in arms. Men of sense were cursing the folly and rashness of South Carolina. Congress was besieged by petitions for redress and relief in some ways acceptable to both sections of the country. Hope was still entertained of conservative action on the part of the Legislatures of Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Maryland stood firm. If those States had proved loyal the Union might have been maintained without a war.

The Secretary's embarrassments may be understood by an attentive perusal of a letter, dated February 21, and sent by him to Congress, in response to a resolution of the House of Representatives calling for information on some matters of

vast importance to the government. It embraces the following points:

1. The collection of duties on imports;
2. Light-houses, beacons, and buoys;
3. The Branch Mint at New Orleans;
4. The Marine Hospital;
5. The revenue-cutters.

It appears from this communication that the duties on imports continued to be collected in the ports of entry established by law in the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Florida, but that the collectors assumed to perform their duties under the authority of the States in which they resided, and held the money they received subject to the State authority. As a specimen of the unspeakable coolness of those demoralized officials, take the following:

On the 4th instant the following letter was received from John Boston, Esq., collector of the customs for the port of Savannah, whose resignation, dated January 31, was subsequently tendered:

"Custom-house, Collector's Office, Savannah, January 30, 1861.

"SIR,—I to-day received the following despatch from his Excellency Joseph E. Brown, Governor of Georgia:

"'You will pay no more money from the Custom-house to any government or person without my order.'

"Respectfully, your obedient servant,

"JOHN BOSTON, *Collector.*

"Hon. JOHN A. DIX,
"Secretary of the Treasury, Washington."

The following answer was immediately despatched by mail:

"Treasury Department, February 4, 1861.

"SIR,—Your letter of the 30th ultimo, containing a copy of a despatch from the Governor of Georgia, directing you to pay 'no more money from the Custom-house to any government or person without his order,' is received.

"You will please to advise me, by return of mail, whether it is your purpose to obey his direction, or whether you will conform to the instruc-

tions of this department, and perform your duty under the laws of the United States. Very respectfully, JOHN A. DIX,

"Secretary of the Treasury.

"JOHN BOSTON, Esq.,

"Collector of the Customs, Savannah, Georgia."

On the 12th instant the following reply was received:

"Savannah, February 8, 1861.

"SIR,—Your letter, under date of the 4th instant, asking me whether it is my purpose to obey the direction of the Government of Georgia to pay no more money from the Custom-house to any government or person without his order, or whether I will conform to the instructions of this (your) department, and perform your (my) duty under the law of the United States, is this moment received; and, in reply, I beg to say that I will, as a good and loyal citizen, as I hope I am, obey the authority of my State. Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"JOHN BOSTON.

"Hon. JOHN A. DIX,

"Secretary of the Treasury, Washington."

This declaration was carried out at a later day by refusing to pay a draft for the compensation of a revenue-officer in his own State.

It also appears that the free navigation of the Mississippi River, which had been guaranteed as a perpetual right to the people of the United States at the time of the purchase of Louisiana, had been interrupted by the authorities at New Orleans, to the great loss and injury of all the North-western States, the inward commerce of the great West having thus been made subject to the authority of the State of Louisiana and tributary to her treasury. No madder proceeding could have been imagined, nor one more certain to open the eyes of Western men to the results of secession.

The subject of the Marine Hospital at New Orleans involved (as will be seen in the following extracts from General Dix's papers) some vigorous correspondence:

"*The Marine Hospital.*

"In the month of June, 1858, the Marine Hospital opposite New Orleans became seriously injured by the overflow of the

waters of the Mississippi River. Its foundations were so disturbed by the flood that it was deemed unsafe for occupation. The barracks, two miles below the city, being untenanted and not needed for troops, they were, with the consent of the War Department, appropriated to the use of the sick, who were removed to them, and have occupied them ever since.

"On the 26th day of January, ultimo, I received the following letter from the Collector of the Customs at New Orleans:

"'Custom-house, New Orleans, Collector's Office, January 14, 1861.

"'SIR,—I have the honor to inform you that the United States barracks below the city have been taken possession of in the name of the State of Louisiana, as will appear by the enclosed communication from "C. M. Bradford, Captain Louisiana Infantry." I shall take steps to remove these invalids, if necessary, at an early date, and with due regard to economy. Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"'F. H. HATCH, Collector.

"'Hon. P. F. THOMAS,

"'Secretary of the Treasury, Washington.'

"In this letter was enclosed one from Captain Bradford, to which it alluded, and which is as follows:

"'Barracks, near New Orleans, January 13 (Sunday), 1861.

"'SIR,—On the 11th instant I took possession of these barracks in the name of the State of Louisiana, and they will hereafter be held by the same authority. I find herein some two hundred and sixteen invalids and convalescent patients, who were removed here some months ago, by your authority, from the Marine Hospital on the opposite bank of the river during the recent overflow.

"'As these quarters will all be required for the Louisiana troops now being enlisted, I have to request that you will immediately remove those patients who are convalescent, and, as soon as in the opinion of the resident surgeon it may be practicable and humane, those who are now confined to their beds.

"'I beg leave farther to add that the quarters now occupied by the surgeon and his assistants, nurses, stewards, etc., will remain at their use and disposal as long as may, in the surgeon's opinion, be necessary.

"'Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"'C. M. BRADFORD,

"'Captain, First Louisiana Infantry.

"'F. H. HATCH, Esq.,

"'Collector U. S. Customs, New Orleans.'

"On the following day I sent to the Collector the following despatch by telegraph:

"'Treasury Department, January 27, 1861.

"'Apply to the Governor of Louisiana to revoke Captain Bradford's order. Remonstrate with the Governor against the inhumanity of turning the sick out of the hospital. If he refuses to interfere, have them removed under the care of the resident surgeon, and do all in your power to provide for their comfort. JOHN A. DIX,

"'Secretary of the Treasury.

"'F. H. HATCH,

"'Collector of Customs, New Orleans.'

"On the 28th I addressed the following letter to the Collector:

"'Treasury Department, January 28, 1861.

"'SIR,—I did not receive until the 26th instant yours of the 14th, informing me that the United States barracks below the city of New Orleans had "been taken possession of in the name of the State of Louisiana." I found enclosed a copy of the letter of Captain C. M. Bradford, of the First Louisiana Infantry, advising you that he had taken possession of the barracks; that they would "be required for the Louisiana troops now being enlisted;" and requesting you to "immediately remove those patients who are convalescent, and, as soon as in the opinion of the resident surgeon it may be practicable and humane, those also who are now confined to their beds." He also states that the barracks contained "two hundred and sixteen invalids and convalescent patients."

"'On this transaction, as an outrage to the public authority, I have no comment to make. But I cannot believe that a proceeding so discordant with the character of the people of the United States, and so revolting to the civilization of the age, has had the sanction of the Governor of the State of Louisiana. I sent a telegraphic message to you yesterday, desiring you to remonstrate with him against the inhumanity of Captain Bradford's order, and ask him to revoke it. But if he should decline to interfere, I instructed you in regard to the removal and treatment of the sick; and, in that event, I trust you will carry out my direction, not merely with "economy," but with a careful regard to their helpless condition.

"'The barracks, it seems, were taken possession of on the 11th instant. Captain Bradford's letter is dated the 13th, and yours the 14th, though I had no information on the subject until the 26th. I infer from the newspaper paragraph you enclosed, which telegraphic advices in regard to the subject-matter show to be of a later date than your letter, that the latter was not despatched until the 21st or 22d instant. I hope I am mistaken, and that the cause of the delay is to be found in some unexplained interruption of the mail. I should otherwise have great reason

to be dissatisfied that the information was not more promptly communicated.'

"'From the tone of the newspaper paragraph you enclosed, and from the seizure of the barracks, in violation of a usage of humanity, which in open war between contending nations, and even in the most revengeful civil conflicts between kindred races, has always held sacred from disturbance edifices dedicated to the care and comfort of the sick, I fear that no public property is likely to be respected. You will, therefore, have no more money expended on the revenue-cutter *Washington*, now hauled up for repairs, until I can have the assurance that she will not be seized as soon as she is refitted, and taken into the service of those who are seeking to break up the Union and overthrow the authority of the Federal Government.

"'I am, respectfully, yours, JOHN A. DIX,

"'Secretary of the Treasury.

"'F. H. HATCH, Esq.,

"'Collector of Customs, New Orleans.'"

I must now give the history of the famous despatch referring to the American flag. It made a profound impression on the country, and fell like a live coal on a mass of material ready to ignite. There are two accounts, both given by my father; one may be found in the second volume of his published Speeches and Occasional Addresses, under Section V. of his communication to the House of Representatives. The other is now printed for the first time. It was written for Mrs. William T. Blodgett, of New York, with the request that it should not be published during his own lifetime or that of ex-President Buchanan. The limitation has long since expired, and I am glad to be able to present this most interesting document to the reader, referring him for additional particulars to the official report made to Congress:

"Head-quarters, Department of the East,
New York City, March 31, 1865.

"MY DEAR MRS. BLODGETT,—I fulfil the promise, made to you last summer, to give you the history of the order issued by me to shoot any man who should attempt to haul down the American flag. The only request I make is that no publication shall be given to it during my life and Mr. Buchanan's.

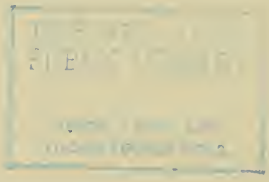
"I was requested by Mr. Buchanan to go to Washington early in January, 1861. He said he wished me to take a place in his Cabinet, and

Treasury Department
Jan. 29, 1861

Tell Lieut. Caldwell to arrest Capt. Breshwood, assume command of the Cutter and obey the order I gave through Gov. ~~of~~ Capt. Breshwood after arrest undertaking to interfere with the Command of the Cutter, tell Lieut. Caldwell to consider him as a Mutineer & treat him accordingly. If any one attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the Spot. —

John A. Dix
Secretary of the Treasury.

FAC-SIMILE OF THE DESPATCH.



offered me the War Department, which I declined. Mr. Holt, Postmaster-general, was Acting Secretary of War, and I told the President I could do nothing in that office to which the incumbent was not fully adequate. But I said to him that if he thought I could be of any use to him in the Treasury Department, I would not refuse it. He replied that he thought he could make the arrangement, and I left Washington for New York. Before I reached home I saw my appointment in the newspapers. Howell Cobb had resigned as Secretary of the Treasury a few weeks before and returned to Georgia, for the purpose of co-operating with that State in the attempt to break up the Union. Philip F. Thomas of Maryland had been appointed in his place, but had not responded to the expectations of the President or the country in the performance of its duties, the credit of the government having fallen under him even to a lower ebb than under his predecessor.

"I entered on my duties on the 15th day of January, 1861, and at Mr. Buchanan's urgent request stayed with him at the President's house. Forts, arsenals, and revenue-cutters in the Southern States had been seized by the local authorities. No effort had been made by the government to secure its property; and there was an apparent indifference in the public mind to these outrages which was incomprehensible to me.

"On the 18th of January, three days after I entered on my duties, I sent a special messenger, W. Hemphill Jones, Esq., who was chief clerk in one of the bureaus of the Treasury Department, to New Orleans, for the purpose of saving the revenue-cutters in that city. He was then to proceed to Mobile and Galveston and try to save the revenue-cutters there. My orders were to provision them and send them to New York. I knew if they remained there that the State authorities would take possession of them.

"I received from Mr. Jones, on the 29th of January, the despatch published on page 440, vol. ii., of my Speeches, advising me that Captain Breshwood, of the revenue-cutter *McClelland*, refused to obey my order. It was about seven o'clock in the evening. I had dined, and was at the department as usual, transacting business. The moment I read it I wrote the following order:

"'Treasury Department, January 29, 1861.

"'Tell Lieutenant Caldwell to arrest Captain Breshwood, assume command of the cutter, and obey the order I gave through you. If Captain Breshwood, after arrest, undertakes to interfere with the command of the cutter, tell Lieutenant Caldwell to consider him as a mutineer, and treat him accordingly. If any one attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the spot. JOHN A. DIX,

"'Secretary of the Treasury.'

"Not a word was altered; but the original was handed to the clerk charged with the custody of my telegraphic despatches, copied by him, and the copy signed by me and sent to its destination. Before I sent it, however, a question of military etiquette arose in my mind in regard to the arrest of Captain Breshwood, and I took a carriage and drove to the lodgings of Lieutenant-general Scott, to consult him in regard to it. Mr. Stanton was then Attorney-general. My relations with him were of the most intimate character; and as he resided near General Scott's lodgings I drove to his house first, and showed the despatch to him. He approved of it, and made some remark expressing his gratification at the tone of the order. General Scott said I was right on the question of etiquette, and I think expressed his gratification that I had taken a decided stand against Southern invasions of the authority of the government. I immediately returned to the department and sent the despatch. General Scott, Mr. Stanton, and the clerk who copied it were the only persons who saw it.

"It was on Tuesday evening, the weekly drawing-room evening of Miss Lane, and before nine o'clock I was with her visitors.

"I decided when I wrote the order to say nothing to the President about it. I was satisfied that, if he was consulted, he would not permit it to be sent. Though indignant at the course of the Southern States, and the men about him who had betrayed his confidence—Cobb, Floyd, and others—one leading idea had taken possession of his mind, that in the civil contest which threatened to break out the North must not shed the first drop of blood. This idea is the key to his submission to much which should have been met with prompt and vigorous resistance. During the seven weeks I was with him he rarely failed to come to my room about ten o'clock, and converse with me for about an hour on the great questions of the day before going to his own room. I was strongly impressed with his conscientiousness. But he was timid and credulous. His confidence was easily gained, and it was not difficult for an artful man to deceive him. But I remember no instance in my unreserved intercourse with him in which I had reason to doubt his uprightness.

"Tuesdays and Fridays were Cabinet days. The members met, without notice, at the President's house in the morning. My order was given, as has been stated, on Tuesday evening. I said nothing to the President in regard to it, though he was with me every evening, until Friday, when the members of the Cabinet were all assembled, and the President was about to call our attention to the business of the day. I said to him, 'Mr. President, I fear we have lost some more of our revenue-cutters.' 'Ah!' said he, 'how is that?' I then told him what had occurred down to the receipt of the despatch from Mr. Jones, informing me that Captain Bresh-

wood refused to obey my order. 'Well,' said he, 'what did you do?' I then repeated to him, slowly and distinctly, the order I had sent. When I came to the words, 'Shoot him on the spot,' he started suddenly, and said, with a good deal of emotion, 'Did you write that?' 'No, sir,' I said, 'I did not write it, but I telegraphed it.' He made no answer; nor do I remember that he ever referred to it afterward. It was manifest, as I had presupposed, that the order would never have been given if I had consulted him.

"It only remains for me to say that the order was not the result of any premeditation—scarcely of any thought. A conviction of the right course to be taken was as instantaneous as a flash of light; and I did not think, when I seized the nearest pen (a very bad one, as the fac-simile shows) and wrote the order in as little time as it would take to read it, that I was doing anything specially worthy of remembrance. It touched the public mind and heart strongly, no doubt, because the blood of all patriotic men was boiling with indignation at the humiliation which we were enduring; and I claim no other merit than that of having thought rightly, and of having expressed strongly what I felt in common with the great body of my countrymen.

"It gives me great pleasure, my dear Mrs. Blodgett, to place in your hands this plain history of an official act which has made me so much your debtor. I can never forget that I owe to your kindness the most valuable testimonial of my public services that I have ever received. The obligation is the more grateful to me, because you seem of all others to be the least conscious of the value of what you have conferred.

"With the sincerest regard, your friend, JOHN A. DIX."

Such is the history of the famous despatch. In concluding it I quote my father's words by way of explanation and justification of his language. He says, in his report to Congress:

"It may be proper to add, in reference to the closing period of the foregoing despatch, that as the flag of the Union, since 1777, when it was devised and adopted by the founders of the Republic, had never until a recent day been hauled down, except by honorable hands in manly conflict, no hesitation was felt in attempting to uphold it at any cost against an act of treachery, as the ensign of the public authority and the emblem of unnumbered victories by land and sea."

The valuable testimonial referred to at the close of this letter was a flag, designed by Leutze, made by Tiffany & Co.,

and given to General Dix by Mrs. Blodgett at the Metropolitan Fair in 1864. An account of the presentation will be found farther on. In the mean time the reader may be glad to know the history of the flag which was flying on the revenue-cutter when the now famous despatch was sent to Mr. Hemphill Jones. The striking incidents are contained in the following documents:

"Head-quarters, Department of the Gulf,
New Orleans, La., June 26, 1862.

"My dear General,—When I read your decisive and patriotic order, as Secretary of Treasury, 'to shoot on the spot' whomsoever should attempt to haul down the American flag, my heart bounded with joy. It was the first bold stroke in favor of the Union under the past administration.

"It gives me, therefore, redoubled pleasure more directly to testify my admiration by sending you the identical flag of the revenue-cutter *McClelland*, which was the subject of that order, together with the Confederate flag which was hoisted by traitor hands in its place.

"David Ritchie, a young Scotch sailor on board that boat, remaining true to his adopted country when so many of her sons proved recreant, went on board the *McClelland* when she was being burnt by the Confederates and brought off the flags.

"His affidavit, which accompanies this, will give the detail of the facts.

"I doubt not the Secretary of the Treasury will permit you to retain the flags, which could not be in better hands.

"Believe me, General, most truly yours, Benj. F. Butler."

"To Major-general John A. Dix.

"'*Statement of David Ritchie.*

"'Am a native of Montrose, in the north of Scotland; have lived in this country seven years; have followed the sea as a profession since I left school.

"'For two years prior to August, 1859, I was employed by Henry Mitchell, Esq., in the United States Coast Survey Department. From this I enlisted on board the revenue-cutter *Robert McClelland*, at the time she was put in commission in New York.

"'Was on the New York station about a year, and then left for New Orleans, where the *McClelland* was to relieve the revenue-cutter *Washington*. Arrived at New Orleans late in September. After Mr. Jones, the

special agent from Secretary Dix, arrived I heard Captain Hudgins of the *McClelland* say that Mr. Jones had read the famous order—"Shoot the first man that attempts to haul down the American flag"—in the cabin of the *McClelland*, and had placed Captain Breshwood in irons for disobedience of orders. About a week after this the Revenue flag was taken down from the *McClelland* and put into the signal-house. For about two weeks no flag was raised; then the Secession flag was run up to the peak.

"'On the night of the 24th of April last, the authorities here, learning that the Federal fleet had passed the forts, determined to burn the *McClelland*. She lay at the dock in Algiers, and as they were removing such articles in her as they wished to save I remarked to a friend that I was bound to get the old Revenue flag and the Secession one also. About half-past two o'clock, on the morning of the 25th of April, the *McClelland* was dropped off, and her anchors let go and then fired. Just before she dropped off I jumped aboard and went to the signal-house, where among various signal flags I found the Revenue and Secession flags, and rolled them up and carried them off, and have since kept them in my house in Algiers.

"'I am perfectly certain and satisfied that this Revenue flag is the identical one which elicited the noted order of General Dix, and that the other is the flag which has been flying from the *McClelland* since, until the capture of the forts. (Signed) DAVID RITCHIE.

"'Subscribed and sworn to before me,

"'(Signed) WM. M. BALL, Provost Judge.'"

The history of another of the revenue-cutters may also be given here, by way of completing the gloomy picture of that anxious time. I take it from the Secretary's official report already referred to.

The revenue-cutter *Henry Dodge*, at Galveston, Texas, was understood to be so much out of repair as to render it very questionable whether she could be safely taken to New York. Under these circumstances, the following order was sent to her commanding officer:

"Treasury Department, January 22, 1861.

"SIR,—If the revenue-cutter *Henry Dodge*, to the command of which you were assigned by an order of the 19th instant, should on examination prove to be seaworthy, you will immediately provision her for six

weeks and sail for New York, reporting yourself on arrival to the collector of the port. While making your preparations for sailing you will exercise the utmost vigilance in guarding your vessel against attack from any quarter. If any hostile movement should be made against you, you will defend yourself to the last extremity. The national flag must not be dishonored. If you are in danger of being overpowered by superior numbers, you will put to sea and proceed to Key West to provision; or if intercepted so that you cannot go to sea, and are unable to keep possession of your vessel, you will run her ashore, and if possible blow her up, so that she may not be used against the United States.

"I am, very respectfully, JOHN A. DIX,

"Secretary of the Treasury.

"Captain J. J. MORRISON,

"Commanding revenue-cutter *Henry Dodge*, Galveston, Texas."

"It was the determination of this Department to adopt such measures as to prevent, if possible, the revenue-vessels, for which it was responsible, from being taken by force, and used for the purpose of overthrowing the public authority. Any attempt to gain possession of them by military coercion could not be regarded in any other light than as an act of war, proper to be resisted by force of arms; and it was deemed far more creditable to the country that they should be blown into fragments than that they should be pusillanimously or treacherously surrendered and employed against the government which they were constructed and commissioned to support.

"At the last accounts the *Dodge*, in consequence of her unfitness to proceed to New York, was to be placed at the disposal of the Coast Survey in the vicinity of Galveston for temporary service, in case of any hostile demonstration against her. Captain Morrison, who was ordered to take charge of her before his fidelity to the government was questioned, having been dismissed from the service, the command has devolved on Lieutenant William F. Rogers, in whose good faith and firmness entire confidence is reposed.

"It only remains to state, under this branch of the inquiries addressed to this Department, that Captain John G. Breshwood and Lieutenants S. B. Caldwell and Thomas D. Fister, who voluntarily surrendered the revenue-cutter *Robert McClelland* to the State of Louisiana, have been dismissed from the Revenue Service.

"I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"JOHN A. DIX,

"Secretary of the Treasury.

"Hon. WM. PENNINGTON,

"Speaker of the House of Representatives."

General Dix's service as Secretary of the Treasury, though brief, was very important. When called to that position the financial affairs of the government were apparently beyond redemption; the Treasury was without money, the administration without credit. Requisitions from the various departments, to the extent of nearly $2,000,000, were on the table, with no funds to meet their payment; the Treasury notes overdue amounted to about $350,000. Not a dollar could be had from the bankers and capitalists of Wall Street. No one would have undertaken the apparently desperate task of bridging over the interval between the outgoing and incoming administrations except a man who was both confident in his ability to meet the crisis, and unselfish enough to risk a total failure; no one would have been equal to the emergency except a man who placed the love of his country above all personal and private considerations, and had implicit confidence in her future. His success was complete. He cleansed and purified, in great measure, what had become a house of corruption; he transferred to the hands of Mr. Chase, President Lincoln's Secretary, a balance of $6,000,000, applicable to the current expenses of the government. In a word, he set the National Government on its legs, restored the credit of the country, and put it in a position to meet the shock under which, if not so strengthened, it must have gone down. All this was done, not only with consummate financial ability, but in the spirit of the broadest patriotism, and with an earnest effort to avert the terrible arbitration of war. Referring to the desires and hopes which actuated himself and his colleagues during the close of the last Democratic administration that the country has seen, he left on record these memorable words:*

"Throughout the whole course of encroachment and aggression the Federal Government has borne itself with a spirit of paternal forbearance of which there is no example

* Speeches and Occasional Addresses, vol. ii., page 424.

in the history of public society, waiting in patient hope that the empire of reason would resume its sway over those whom the excitement of passion has thus far blinded, and trusting that the friends of good order, wearied with submission to proceedings which they disapproved, would at no distant day rally under the banner of the Union, and exert themselves with vigor and success against the prevailing recklessness and violence."

In the London *Observer*, February 9, 1862, a sensational story appeared about an alleged "Cabinet Scene." It ran as follows:

"Major Anderson, when commanding Fort Moultrie, Charleston Harbor, finding his position endangered, passed his garrison, by a prompt and brilliant movement, over to the stronger fortress of Sumter; whereupon Mr. Floyd, Secretary of War, much excited, called upon the President, to say that Major Anderson had violated express orders and thereby seriously compromised him (Floyd), and that unless the major was immediately remanded to Fort Moultrie he should resign the War-office.

"The Cabinet was assembled directly. Mr. Buchanan, explaining the embarrassment of the Secretary of War, remarked that the act of Major Anderson would occasion exasperation in the South. He had told Mr. Floyd that, as the government was strong, forbearance toward erring brethren might win them back to their allegiance, and that that officer might be ordered back.

"After an ominous silence, the President inquired how the suggestion struck his Cabinet.

"Mr. Stanton, then Attorney-general, answered: 'That course, Mr. President, ought certainly to be regarded as most liberal toward erring brethren; but while one member of your Cabinet has fraudulent acceptances for millions of dollars afloat, and while the confidential clerk of another—himself in Carolina teaching rebellion—has just stolen $900,000 from the Indian Trust Fund, the experiment of ordering Major

Anderson back to Fort Moultrie would be dangerous. But if you intend to try it, before it is done I beg that you will accept my resignation.'

"'And mine,' added the Secretary of State, Mr. Black.

"'And mine also,' said the Postmaster-general, Mr. Holt.

"'And mine too,' followed the Secretary of the Treasury, General Dix.

"This, of course, opened the bleared eyes of the President, and the meeting resulted in the acceptance of Mr. Floyd's resignation."

This highly colored narrative was not only untrue, but may be taken as a specimen of the numerous inventions of a time of excitement. I have the written testimony of two of the alleged actors that no such thing occurred at any time while they were in the Cabinet. General Dix, in reply to a letter from a gentleman who quoted the foregoing extract, and asked for information as to its authenticity, says:

"New York, September 11, 1863.

"DEAR SIR,—I owe you an apology for so long neglecting to answer your letter of the 31st ultimo.

"I do not recollect any circumstances like those stated in the extract quoted in your letter. The extract is in more than one respect altogether erroneous. I never met Mr. Floyd in Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet. I was appointed Secretary of the Treasury after Mr. Floyd had retired from the War Department, and while the duties were discharged by the Postmaster-general, Mr. Holt. During my connection with Mr. Buchanan's administration no incident occurred to suggest to me a tender of my resignation.

"My public duties have been so engrossing that I have been unable to refer to memoranda of dates, etc., but I will do so, if my answer is not sufficiently explicit. I am, respectfully yours,

"JOHN A. DIX.

"AUGUSTUS SCHELL, Esq."

Judge Black, another of the persons mentioned in the account, says, in a letter addressed to me December 19, 1881:

"What is called a 'Cabinet Scene' was falsely described in a way to do Mr. Buchanan great injury, and he felt it deeply

for the last seven years of his life. Some of the versions represent General Dix as backing Stanton, and others in bullying and insulting the President, who, according to all the stories, submitted like a coward and backed out of his predetermined measure. It was a mere fabrication; nothing at all like it ever took place. The date assigned to it by the inventors was before General Dix was appointed. Nevertheless, the lie had such a run, that some friend of General Dix, after his death, repeated it in an obituary notice. I trust you will pardon me for suggesting that you may honor your father by showing that he never countenanced this falsehood. I cannot furnish the proof that he ever publicly contradicted it, but you doubtless know that he often expressed his contempt for it and its authors. I speak confidently, because he was incapable of doing anything to encourage a mere slander."

On the inauguration of President Lincoln, General Dix returned to New York. Before his departure from Washington he took leave of his associates and friends in a farewell interview, which is thus described in the *National Intelligencer* of March 8, 1861:

"*Valedictory of Mr. Secretary Dix.*

"Yesterday, in the saloon of the south wing of the Treasury building, there was a very large meeting, consisting of over two hundred and fifty in number, almost spontaneously assembled, of the heads of bureaus and clerks of the Treasury Department, to pay their farewell respects to General Dix, whose brilliant administration of the Treasury Department during the past eight weeks has restored confidence in the financial world, and his affable manners and prompt business habits have secured him the affection as well as respect of all those who were brought into communication with him.

"The meeting was altogether informal, and, by request, Mr. Medill, the First Comptroller of the Treasury, made the following address to General Dix:

"'General Dix,—The heads of bureaus and the clerks of the Treasury Department have sought this occasion to express to you their high appreciation of the dignity and efficiency with which you have presided over and administered the affairs of the Department, and to take a respectful leave of you before you depart for that home from which you were so suddenly and so unexpectedly drawn by the demands of your country.

"'Called, Sir, to a most difficult position at a time of unprecedented embarrassment, and when the credit and the Treasury of the country were almost equally low, it was not long until your energy and high character restored both.

"'Your kind deportment and quiet amenity of manners have secured you the personal respect and warmest regards of all who had the pleasure of serving under your direction, and we now avail ourselves of the opportunity to bid you adieu, and to wish you every happiness which a grateful country can bestow.'

"To this address General Dix made the following reply:

"'Governor Medill and Gentlemen,—When I came here I was not aware that any remarks were to be addressed to me. Much less could I have anticipated that they would have been couched in language so far transcending any merit that I possess. I beg you to be assured, however, that I am not the less grateful for the kind feelings by which they have been dictated.

"'When I requested you to meet together, it was for the purpose of affording me an opportunity of expressing to you my deep sense of the fidelity and zeal with which you have discharged your various duties during my brief connection with the Treasury Department. We have, it is true, seen little of each other; but I know you must have understood the true cause—the severe pressure upon me during a period of unprecedented financial embarrassment, caused by a combination to overthrow the government on the part of men who

were living upon its bounty. If I have, by the force of circumstances, been constrained to give prominence to the consequences of that conspiracy in other sections of the country, you may rest assured that it has been no pleasant duty. It was performed because it was a duty, and because it was believed that the moral of this lesson of disloyalty to the Union would be best read in the odiousness of its manifestations—its recklessness, its violence, and its open disregard of high official obligations. Happily, its influence on this and other departments of the Government has been neutralized; and I take pleasure in saying that, in the talents and personal integrity of my successor in office, the country may confidently count on an able, honest, and efficient administration of its finances. You all know that I have during the last eight weeks been in intimate association, not only officially but personally, with the late Chief Magistrate of the Union, under whom most of you have served during the past four years; and I should do injustice to my own feelings if I were not to say that I have been strongly impressed with the purity of his motives, his conscientiousness, his thorough acquaintance with the business of government in its most complex details, and his anxious desire that the unhappy questions which distract the country may have a peaceful solution. His responsibilities have now passed into other hands; and I trust that no one within the reach of my voice may forget that an administration constitutionally formed is the government of the country, and that its labors for the public good, and its efforts at this juncture to restore harmony and confidence, should meet with a cordial and disinterested support. I did all I could to prevent it from coming into power, but I consider it a duty to test it by its merits, and its just measures should never encounter in any of us a factious opposition.

"'And now, Gentlemen, I must bid you farewell. There has been much in the course of our association, brief as it has been, there is much in the surrounding circumstances of its close, to render this parting painful. It is not in the order

of human life that another sun shall see us all re-assembled. But, wherever you may go, however widely we may be separated from each other, you will carry with you my best wishes for your prosperity. For myself, having laid down the burden of my official service, I shall return, with a feeling of relief which no one can understand, to my domestic occupations and duties, trusting that no public necessity may again call me from them. But if the dark clouds by which our political horizon is overcast shall continue to obscure it, if the emergency shall come, I hope I may not forget that every citizen owes what remains to him of strength, or health, or life to the maintenance of the honor and welfare of the country.'

"The company present then severally advanced and exchanged parting salutations with the highly esteemed Secretary, and afterward retired."

Upon his return to New York, General Dix received an invitation to a public dinner. The letter and his reply form a part of the history of his services as Secretary of the Treasury:

"New York, March 4, 1861.

"*Honorable John A. Dix:*

"Dear Sir,—The undersigned, your fellow citizens of New York, desire to express their grateful sense of the efficient services rendered by you at a critical emergency in the affairs of the country.

"Your management of the National Treasury, at a period when distrust and disorder seriously menaced the public welfare, was marked by decision, firmness, and fidelity to the great trust confided to you. Under your prompt and sagacious action confidence was restored, the national credit preserved, and the integrity of the laws vindicated.

"As members of a community deeply interested in the maintenance of all the authority of constitutional government, the undersigned feel a just pride in the success achieved by one connected with them by ties of citizenship and a common sense of public duty; they earnestly request, therefore, that you will afford the citizens of New York an opportunity of expressing these sentiments in a more appropriate manner, by consenting to accept a public dinner in this city, at such time as may be most convenient to yourself.

"The undersigned avail themselves of this occasion to assure you of their sincere and most respectful regard.

"Luther Bradish,
Hamilton Fish,
P. Perit,
Wm. H. Aspinwall,
D. Thompson,
Shepherd Knapp,
Watts Sherman,
W. B. Astor,
B. R. Winthrop,
Benj. H. Field,
Wm. Chauncey,
Samuel Osgood,
B. W. Bonney,
F. De Peyster,
Geo. S. Coe,
Abram S. Hewitt,
Morris K. Jesup,
Moses Taylor,
F. Tileston,
Jas. Gallatin,
Wm. A. Booth,
David Hoadley,
Jos. D. Alsop,
Edwin Bartlett,
Henry Chauncey,
Theodore Dehon,
O. D. F. Grant,
Wm. Barlow,
Morris Ketchum,
Joseph Laurence,
Peter Cooper,
Greene C. Bronson,
John H. Swift,
S. Baldwin,
James G. King,
Gracie King,
Henry A. Hurlburt,
Robert L. Stuart,
Robert B. Minturn,
Danl. F. Tiemann,
Wm. H. Appleton,
S. B. Chittenden,
John J. Phelps,
George Bliss,
Walden Pell,
George Opdyke,
Alex. T. Stewart,
Fredk. S. Winston,
J. Green Pearson,
J. Punnett,
Samuel B. Ruggles,
A. E. Silliman,
M. H. Grinnell,
Wm. V. Brady,
R. H. McCurdy,
Nathl. Hayden,
Saml. D. Babcock,
Wm. & John O'Brien,
Henry E. Davies,
August Belmont,
Wm. P. Lee,
Gabriel Mead,
Richard Berry,
A. A. Low,
Royal Phelps,
Geo. T. Eliot,
Geo. B. De Forest,
M. Morgan & Sons,
J. Kernochan,
R. Withers,
William B. Taylor,
Charles A. Davis,
Edwd. Whitehouse,
G. W. Duer,
John D. Jones,
Robert C. Goodhue,
Wm. Nelson & Sons,
David Adee,
Jas. M. Brown,
Howard Potter,
W. H. Hays,
Cammann & Co.,
E. T. H. Gibson,
Saml. T. Skidmore,
Marshall O. Roberts,
George Folsom,
A. P. Halsey,
J. L. Douglass,
Edwin Croswell,
Wm. T. Coleman & Co.,
Stewart Brown,
W. C. Wetmore,
Henry Grinnell,
Alfred Pell,
G. T. Robbins,
Jas. D. P. Ogden,
John J. Cisco,
W. H. Johnson,
Jonathan Sturges,
A. C. Kingsland,
Wm. G. Lambert,
Tho. J. Howes,
Morris Franklin,
Jonathan D. Steele,
J. M. McLean,
Ward & Co.,
C. R. Robert,
Wm. E. Dodge,
J. R. Whiting,
Arthur Leary,
Geo. P. Morris,
Cyrus W. Field,
Thos. Clerke,
Jos. Sutherland,
D. P. Ingraham,
Henry Welles,
Wm. H. Leonard,
John T. Hoffman,
Henry Hilton,
Chas. P. Leverich,
E. H. Gillilan,
Geo. T. Strong,
Chas. A. Peabody,
And. Carrigan,
H. G. Bronson,
James J. Roosevelt,
Alex. W. Bradford,
Murray Hoffman,
Chas. P. Daly,
J. W. Gerard."

"New York, March 13, 1861.

"GENTLEMEN,—I have the honor to acknowledge the communication which you presented to me yesterday, signed by a large number of my fellow-citizens, expressing their approbation of my official service in the Treasury Department, and inviting me to accept a public dinner in this city at some convenient time.

"I have no words to express my thankfulness for the honor intended for me, or my gratification in being assured that my brief administration of the financial department of the government has been deemed worthy of the approbation of those whose interests are so intimately interwoven with it. I am not conscious of having done any farther service than that which every good citizen owes to his government, in laboring to uphold its credit and its authority. That it has been rendered with earnestness, and without regard to any other considerations than those which embraced in their scope the interests and the honor of the whole country, I can sincerely say; and in your approval I see, not so much the merit which you are pleased to ascribe to me, as your own devotion to the Union and its precious institutions, baptized in the blood of our common ancestors, and bequeathed to us as an inheritance to be maintained if necessary with our own. In its defence New York has in every emergency borne a conspicuous part: in war, by sending her own citizens against the common enemy, when the power of the General Government was inadequate to the public security; in seasons of financial embarrassment, by pouring out her treasure to uphold the credit of the country, as her children have poured out their blood to uphold its honor. I need not say that I regard the approbation of such a community as the highest testimonial it can give and the most valuable any man can receive. I shall cherish the expression of confidence you have tendered to me as one of the proudest recollections of my life, never forgetting that without your generous and disinterested support my own labors would have been fruitless.

"In conclusion, Gentlemen, I beg you to excuse me from accepting the public dinner you have kindly tendered to me. You will, I know, appreciate my motive when I ask quietly to allow me to return to my domestic avocations. Residents of the same city, we shall often meet, and never without a deep sense on my part of your generous confidence and kindness.

"I am, with the sincerest respect and regard, your obedient servant,

"JOHN A. DIX."

Although the public dinner was declined, he accepted an invitation from the Mayor and Common Council to a reception at the City Hall, "for the purpose of affording the citi-

zens of New York an opportunity to express their high estimation of him as a man and a patriot, in his noble stand in maintaining the dignity of the American flag and in the discharge of the duties of his office." The day fixed was the 14th of March. A detachment of Police escorted him to the City Hall, where he was met by the Hon. Fernando Wood, and conducted to the Governor's Room. His reply to the brief address of welcome was as follows:

"Mr. Mayor,—I thank you for the kind expressions with which you have been pleased to receive me, and for the greater kindness which, as the chief magistrate of this city, you have done me by consenting to be present on this occasion. My thanks are especially due to the Common Council for the great honor they have conferred on me by tendering to me for the reception of my friends a place usually appropriated to those who have far greater claims than myself to such a distinction. They have thought proper to place this mark of their approbation on the ground of my recent services in the Treasury Department. But, in truth, Mr. Mayor, I feel that in this service I have done no more than any other sincere friend of the Union would have done. If the public credit is in danger of being dishonored, who would not strive by all the means in his power to protect it? If the public authority is set at defiance, what citizen with an honest heart in his bosom would not labor zealously and fearlessly to defend and uphold it? These duties are no more than the common obligations of loyalty to the government and to the Union, of which the government is the representative. They became mine in a peculiar sense when I was called to a position in which they devolved on me as attributes of official service. Whatever dishonor there might have been in disregarding or violating them, the merit of fidelity to them is only that of doing what it would have been discreditable not to have done. Sir, I have no claim beyond this to the approbation of my fellow-citizens. But I am not the less thankful for

the honor the Common Council have done me. They have given to me the most grateful of all welcomes—that which proceeds from the confidence of those among whom we live; and I beg to express to them through you my deep and lasting sense of their kindness."

Of the great number of letters received at that time I limit myself to transcribing the two which follow; the one from Governor Morgan, the other from the Hon. Reverdy Johnson:

"Albany, March 9, 1861.

"*The Honorable John A. Dix:*

"My dear Sir,—I am not willing to let another day pass without bearing my testimony, and expressing my sense of obligation to you, for the valuable services rendered to both our State and country by your prompt acceptance of and efficient discharge of the duties of Secretary of the Treasury, at a period of peculiar trial and peril to the National Government.

"During the few weeks that you were at the head of the Treasury Department, at the close of President Buchanan's administration, you happily brought order out of chaos, and gave to capitalists and to others confidence and assurances that treason and traitors had done their worst, and that henceforth law and order were to bear sway in the councils of the Federal Government.

"Your patriotic course during the late most trying emergency has placed the people under obligations to you, which should not pass without some public recognition. And I am sure you neither desire nor can you ever have any acknowledgment that will be so gratifying as the consciousness which you must ever possess of having, under God, faithfully discharged your duty.

"I have the honor to be, with very great respect, your obedient servant,

E. D. Morgan."

"Washington, March 9, 1861.

"My dear General,—I join, with your permission, the universal voice in thanking you for the able and truly patriotic manner in which you discharged, from the first, your duties as Secretary of the Treasury. Such firmness and ability at the commencement of our troubles would, I have no doubt, have preserved the Union. As it is, God only knows what is to be the result. The revolution, though begun without the smallest excuse, much less justification, has now progressed so far that

nothing can arrest it, if that can, but conciliation. This may preserve the border slave States, and I think will. And that done, I have hopes that, sooner or later, the rest will return. But I doubt, greatly doubt, if the President is at all fit for the emergeney; and if he is not, civil war may soon be upon us, and this will be ruin to all.

"Nothing but a severe indisposition, from whieh I am reeovering but slowly, prevented my bidding you an affeetionate adieu before your leaving here. Happen what may, I shall ever look with interest and confidence to your future. Sincerely your friend,

"REVERDY JOHNSON.

"General DIX."

END OF VOL. I.